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BION, THE WANDERER;

OR,

THE FAITHLESS GUARDIAN.

A STORY OF HOME, OF THE OCEAN, AND OF OTHER CLIMES.

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CHAPTER I.

MOTHER AND CHILD.

It was a cold, drizzly day in the month of October. It was near the first of the month, and the weather had been disagreeable for several days. The wind was from the south-east, blowing freshly, and bringing with it a load of mist and chilliness which made the great metropolis anything but pleasant. On Church street, below Canal, stood a large mansion which was kept as a boarding-house of the first class. It was not a hotel, for everything was quiet and private about and within the premises, and no one was permitted to rest there except he or she became a permanent boarder. And at the time of which we write this was well "up town," too. New York had not grown to the extended proportions it has now assumed; and where, at the present time, busy avenues and crowded streets mark the rising tide of humanity, then waved the ripening grain of the husbandman. Still we only go back one generation. Those who are white-haired now, were young and buoyant then; and the man of to-day, who has just become settled in business, with his wife and first child to adorn his home, was, in this past time, an infant upon his mother's bosom.

Within one of the best rooms of the house already mentioned—a room upon the second floor, and looking out upon the street—sat a woman yet in the morning of age; but, alas! I fear not in the morning of her own life. She sat in a large, easy chair, with soft pillows carefully arranged about her, so that she could sit upright, and yet recline with ease. The dark, glossy hair, waving over her shoulders; the large, black eyes, gleaming with a dreamy light; the finely carved features; the almost transparent purity of the skin; and the slight, delicate frame, at once bespoke the child of a southern clime. She had not seen her eight-and-twentieth year. Would she see it on earth?

One less skilled in physiological lore than he who has made it a study would have quickly seen that the occupant of that easy chair was the victim of a lingering, wasting disease; and one who had watched by the couch of a friend through the long, tedious hours of consumption's fatal march, could not have failed to see that the same dread destroyer had claimed the reclining woman for its own!

Her name was recorded in the book of the landlady as MRS. BELINDA HUNTLEY. She had come to that house on the first of June, having sought a northern residence through the warm months of summer. The story of her present position was simply thus: Her home was in New Orleans. She was by birth a Creole—a native of Cuba, of the old Castilian stock; left an orphan at an early age, with some wealth, and in care of a guardian who was no kin of hers. At the age of twenty-one she married with a merchant of New Orleans, who chanced to meet her in Havana, while there on business. On the first of January, about four years after her marriage, and twenty-two months previous to the time of which we write, her husband sailed for Canton, in China. He had business of the utmost importance to call him there; but ere he went he settled up all his affairs in New Orleans, leaving his property wholly in cash, saving only the furniture and pictures which they had used in their hotel.

After her husband was gone, Mrs. Huntley remained at her hotel, with her child, until late in the Spring of the following year. She had not been strong when he went away; but no fears had been entertained. At the expiration of seventeen months, however, she had become weak and sick. Her physician told her she must spend the Summer farther North—that she could not survive another hot season in that trying climate. So she had sought the city of New York, intending to go to some good watering-place as soon as the season opened. But when the warmer sunshine came, and the more favored ones sought the cooler shades and sweeter breathings of green trees and gushing springs, she, alas! was too weak to go. Her physician told her she could not bear it.

But this wasting disease was not the only sorrow that rested upon her. Over a year and a half had passed away since her husband left her, and she had not heard from him!—not one word whereby she might know whether he lived to love her still. The few years they had passed together had been years of peace and joy without alloy. Their love had been perfect, and from the moment of their marriage it had grown in power and depth. She had worshipped the brave and generous man whom God had given her to be her companion; and he had held her as a thing too lovely and pure to be roughly used; feeling never so happy as when reclining by her side, and laboring with the greatest heart when laboring for her good. Ere he went away he told her he would write something every day when he was able, and then send it to her as opportunity should offer.

But not a word yet! She had watched every new-comer with the most intense eagerness, and every letter from her bankers and friends in New Orleans was opened with a hushed and anxiously aching heart. But the one familiar hand was not seen. Not a word yet!

THE PLOTTERS.

Mrs. Huntley had brought two servants on with her—two black girls—Lida and Lizzy. They were both in the room with their mistress now, the former sitting at her feet, while the latter was by the window engaged in sewing.

"Lida," spoke the woman, in a soft sweet tone, the music of which was too deep for such lips, "do you think it will be pleasant soon?"

"Sometime to-morrow," replied the girl, speaking with but very little of the idiom peculiar to her race—and at the same time gazing up with a look which betrayed only the deepest love and gratitude.

"Why do you think so, Lida?"

"Because the moon changes to-morrow, Missus!"

"And so you think the change of the moon will affect the weather, do you?"

"O—I know it will. It always does. Didn't you ever notice, at the end of a long storm, that the moon was just in a change?"

"I wish I were sure of it," murmured the invalid, wistfully.

"Oh—she's right, Missus," cried Lizzy, from the window—a jetty black, middle-aged negress—who had been listening to the conversation. "De moon am de signicumcator ob de wedder. Why—bress your soul, missus, Ise nebber seed de moon change dat we didn't hab some kind of wedder for sartin."

"Very likely," replied the mistress, with a smile.

"O—Ise sartin, missus. Ole Pomp nebber went away from home when de moon was a gwine to change widout he took along his clo'se. *He* know'd what wedder was—ole Pomp did."

"I hope it will be pleasant," the sick woman said, earnestly and prayerfully.

"I tell ye it will be pleasant," persisted Lizzy. "De moon am a gwine to change dis berry night. Ise watched 'im all de time. He's a gwine into his fust quarter."

Lizzy had heard much about judging of the weather from the moon, and looking upon that as one of the most important points of astronomy, she had studied her almanac until she had learned by heart all the changes of the moon for the year. But on the present occasion she saw signs in the heavens which her perceptions caught as sure indications of fair weather; and her assurance was based more upon what she saw than upon anything she knew of meteorological science.

"If it was pleasant would you go out, Missus?" asked Lida affectionately.

"Out?" repeated the woman, starting. "Ah, my child, you will weep, I fear, when I next go out!"

"Why—Missus—you wouldn't go for to go off and leave us?" cried Lida, with a frightened look and tone.

"Foolish child, how many times have I told you that I should not stay much longer with you. Cannot you read the truth upon my pale cheek, and in my hollow voice? Can you not see it in my eye—upon my lip—and upon this wasting frame?"

"Oh! Good Lord wont let you die, Missus! You mean you'll die. I know what you mean. But you mustn't. Oh! you mustn't!"

There was no affectation in all this—but 'twas spoken in a half-frightened tone, while the starting tears told the sincerity of the heart.

"Girls," resumed Mrs. Huntley, "have you done as I bid you some weeks ago?"

"What?" asked both the servants, in a breath—Lizzy rising as she spoke, and coming and sitting upon the carpetted floor at Lida's side.

"Have you found any homes yet? Have you made up your minds what you will do when—when—I—am gone?"

"Don't! Don't!" groaned Lizzy, clapping her hands, and gazing with an eager, beseeching look into her mistress's face. "Don't go for to say sich t'ings. Oh! Good Lord nebber 'll take you away while poor ole Lizzy libs. Look—Ise a'most double as ole as you is, Missus, aint I?"

"Not quite, Lizzy. You are only forty four, I am twenty-seven. You would have to be fifty-four to be twice as old a I am—ten years older than you are now."

"Missus," said the sable servant, gazing earnestly up, and seeming to forget her sorrow for the while in the abstruse problem she had grappled. "You must be mistakened. You must, for sartin. You'se forget sump'n. I remember, jes' as plain as can be, how de day you was so angrified wid dat ole nabob in Habanna, you said I was jes' twice as old as you was. Don't you remember?"

"Yes, Lizzy. But that was ten years ago."

"Ten years?" reflected Lizzy, looking to see if her mistress was in earnest. "An' habn't I lib'd dem ten years as much as you hab. Tell me dat."

"Certainly," returned the lady, with a smile. "But if you were to keep twice as old as I am you would have to live two years to my one."

"Did I lib two years to your one afore that time when you wouldn't hab ole Don—Don—what's him name?"

"No—but you were born seventeen years before I was. Now see: When I was born you were seventeen years old—just seventeen times as old as I was ——"

"Goodness marcy!"

—— "but when I was seventeen, you had only grown seventeen years more—and that made you just twice as old as I. Don't you see. From being seventeen times as old as I was, you came to be only twice as old. So you'll always be seventeen years older than I am while we both live."

Lizzy saw very plainly that her mistress was in earnest, so she said—"O—ye-e-s." But her bothered look, and the earnestness with which she counted seventeen upon her fingers, showed that she didn't comprehend it at all. It was a mathematical paradox to her of mighty depth. However, her mind was soon relieved of the trouble by the subject upon which they had first spoken.

"But never mind that now," resumed Mrs. Huntley. "You know I told you that you must be looking up homes. When I am gone, of course you cannot remain here. And of course you would not wish to return to New Orleans; for you have no friends there. I will give you five thousand dollars each, and with that you can commence life on your own accounts very well. Have you looked around at all—either of you?"

They had not. They could not realize that their loved mistress was going to leave them; and to go away and try to find homes elsewhere, while that mistress lived, seemed little less to them than impious. However, Mrs. Huntley once more assured them that she could not remain with them long, and bade them go as soon as they could and make some good acquaintances among the better classes of their own color. They wept like two children while she spoke to them thus, and flatly refused to seek another friendship while she lived.

Just as the invalid ceased speaking one of the doors was opened, and a child came soberly and softly into the room. It was a boy—a boy not quite five years of age,—but with an older look upon his face. He was small and delicate in frame, with one of those strange heads which betoken that the brain must soon wear out the body. His brow was high and full, with a well-balanced preponderance of intellectual and moral faculties. His eyes were of a deep, rich blue, slightly tending towards a greyish hue; and his other features almost the counterpart of his mother's. They were faultlessly regular, and even possessed that pale, transparent beauty which marked the parent. His manners and speech were characterized by a precocity which sometimes manifests itself in the children of peculiarly sensitive and finely organized parents. His hair, now of a dark flaxen hue, fell about his white neck in neatly arranged ringlets; but it was evident that a few more years, if he lived to see them, would make that hair darker, and also change the blue of those eyes to more of the greyish cast.

"Bion," said his mother, placing her thin hand upon his head, as he came close to her side, "where have you been?"

"Miss Marshall has been giving me my reading lesson, mamma; and a very beautiful lesson it was, too."

"What was it about, my son?"

"It was about Alexander the Great," replied the boy, his eyes growing brighter, and his face assuming a momentary flush. "Oh—what a great man he was!"

"But was he a good man, Bion?"

"Wasn't he a good man, mamma?" the boy quickly asked.

"Not so good as he ought to have been, my son."

The child pondered a few moments, and then said,—

"What a pity so great a man shouldn't have been good. Why—only think, mamma—how very, very good such a man might be if he wanted to. How much good he could do, couldn't he?"

"Yes, Bion."

"I couldn't help thinking, while I read about Alexander, how much better this city would be if he could take it than it is now."

"How so, my son?"

"Why—don't you see: He would have the power then; and he could take all he wanted to make the poor people happy. If a rich old bad man had lots of money stuck away in stockings, and in old iron boxes under the ground, Alexander could take it and help the poor with it."

"That is—if he was good."

"Well—but—how can a great, brave man help being good?"

"Ah, my child, they are not always good!"

"But 'most always, aren't they, mamma?"

"Not great conquerors, my son. They have been too often guided by avarice and ambition in attaining their greatness."

"I know what ambition is, mamma—because Alexander was full of it. But what is avarice? It doesn't say anything about it there."

"Avarice, my son, is that spirit in men which leads them to gain and hold things which are for their benefit alone; and which can only feed the worst passions of the soul. When a man desires money just for the sake of having it to hoard up—just as the old miser that you spoke of did—then he is avaricious. Do you understand?"

"Yes," replied the child, with his eyes cast down, and his mind evidently at work upon the subject. He pondered a few moments, and then he added,—

"I think Alexander was avaricious, then. Why—would you believe it, mamma?—he even sat down at home, after he had conquered a great nation, and cried because there wasn't any more for him to conquer. Wasn't that funny?"

"It shows that he was so avaricious that he was made unhappy by it,—doesn't it?"

"Yes, mamma,—it does."

"Then you mus'n't allow yourself to become fascinated with——"

"*Fascinated?*"

"I mean too much pleased with his character. You must not wish to imitate such a disposition."

"O—I should never do that, mamma. Alexander killed men. He burned up great cities, and put to death all the people. Oh! I should never want to be like him in that. But—but—I should like to be as great as he was. Don't you think you shall love me better when I grow up, if I grow to be a great man, and a good man, too? Only think, mamma dear;—you will be old then, and how happy—oh! how happy I shall be to help you along and protect you in that time."

The fond mother gazed a moment into the handsome, soul-wrought features of her boy, and then, with a burst of tears, she threw her arms about him, and pressed him to her bosom.

"Mamma," spoke the child, even more earnestly than was his wont, "why do you weep so much now? You didn't use to do so. Why is it? Everytime you look at me now you weep. Why is it? When I came in Lida and Lizzy had been crying. Come, mamma—tell your Bion why it is. Tell me."

But the mother only strained him to her bosom and spoke not a word. It was hard to die in the morning of life; it was harder still to die without seeing her husband; but—oh! how deep the agony when she thought of that pure and gentle child! Who should guide those trembling steps, and lead that strange young mind safely along through the various paths of knowledge? Sometimes—in the deep, still night—when the pain was intense, and her breath came hard and reluctantly—when her head ached, and her heart struggled weakly at its work—when she remembered the friends of her early youth, her parents, her sister, and a loved brother, all passed away to the land of the Hereafter,—then she folded her hands, and calmly thought of death—only praying that she might meet the loved ones gone before.

But—in the other hour—when she thought of her child—when she held him to her bosom, and knew that in all the world, if his father were gone, there was not one to love him as he needed—when she thought of the dreary, desolate orphanage—then she clasped her hands more eagerly, and begged God to let her live!—to live for her child—mayhap to see her husband again on earth—she asked for nothing more.

The mother had pondered some moments for a reply to the question of her child, and was becoming nervous and fearful, when a light tap sounded upon the door.

"It's Mister Christopher," said Lida, who had gone to the door and received the message from the servant there.

"Let him come up," the sick woman said. "Bion, my child—you'll run out a little while, wont you?"

"And you'll answer my question when I come back, mamma?"

"Perhaps so, dear."

The boy turned towards the door, and passed out. In the hall he met the man who had come to see his mother. He knew the man was his uncle; but even now as he met the gaze of the brother of his father, his young heart quaked with a deadly fear! Why was it? We shall see.

CHAPTER II.

THE DARK UNCLE.

The man who thus entered the apartment of the sick woman was dressed well, and seemed to be a person of temperate habits so far as outright dissipation is concerned. But here the favorable points stop. He was tall and stout; forty years of age; with black hair and eyes; and with a complexion, naturally dark, made more dark by exposure. There was nothing strikingly repulsive in his features; but yet not one woman in a thousand would have dared to trust him. There was an evil look in his black eye; and that same look crept down his beak-like nose, and dwelt upon his coarse, heavy lips. His step, as he entered the room, was more like the crawl of a panther than like the step of a man; and his glance was uneasy and tortured, like the glance of one whose deepest feelings must be hidden.

And why should the pure, gentle woman, who was passing on towards the shores of the upper world, trust in such a man?

Ah—he was the brother—the only brother of her husband. When, only a few weeks before, she had heard from New Orleans that her husband's brother was coming on, she had felt very glad. She had never seen him; but he was a brother to the man she loved best on earth, and she felt the bond of sympathy for him.

And when she saw him did she not recoil from his presence?

Ah, no! Would to God that she had! But she did not. He was very gentle and he spoke very kindly. He shed tears when he spoke of the brother over the sea. Ere the poor woman could read his face by the dim light in which she first saw him he had laid hold upon her sympathy. He had come first just as the day was mingling its lights with the shades of evening; so the face, which art could not have changed, was half hidden, while the speech, which may be wrought to any circumstances, stood boldly out.

But when she saw him in the full light of day, did she not then recoil?

No. Her first impression was a strong one. His words were still touching and gentle, and his face was fairly hidden behind his tongue! Belinda Huntley believed he was good and kind, and that he meant well. He was the brother of her husband. How could he be else than kind to the wife and child of his boyhood's best companion?

At a commanding nod from the new-comer the two girls left the room, and when the door was closed behind them the man approached the great chair, took the hand of the invalid, and pressed it to his lips.

"Wife of my beloved brother," he said, tenderly, "let me hope that I find you improved. Let me hear you say that your old fears are gone."

"Ah, Christopher," she answered, with a faint smile, "my improvement can only be such as shall fit me better for the unseen land towards which I am swiftly journeying. I am——"

"What, my own sister?"

"Going!"

"Say not so. Oh! let me speak more joyous words. Let me bid you live. You are easier than you were yesterday."

"I am not in so much pain, brother; for my frame has become too weak to feel it. Last night

I had strange feelings. As I lay awake, and heard the moaning wind whispering at my windows, I asked myself how I felt; and myself answered very truly I am sure."

"And that answer my sister—what was it?"

"That a few days—a very few at the farthest—would complete the sum of my allotted time on earth. Stop——Hear me through. I considered carefully my feelings for the last few months; I remembered what my physician had told me; and when I summed all up I knew that I must soon die! I can feel it very plainly. I—I—*know it!*"

Christopher Huntley drew back and bowed his head. He remained so for some moments, and then said—

"My sister, I should not be to you a true friend if I did not speak the truth, however much that truth may rack my soul in the utterance. I fear you are right."

"Aye, my brother—I know I am. Oh! if I could only hear from *him* ere I fall asleep! You have not heard yet?"

"No—not directly."

"Not *directly?*" uttered the invalid, energetically. Have you heard at all?"

"I saw a man yesterday who had just arrived from China; and I asked him if he had seen my brother. He told me there was a man of that very name just recovering from a severe sickness when he left. He said the man was from New Orleans—that his name was Gideon Huntley—and that he was a merchant. He had been sick, nigh unto death, for many months, but was recovering when he parted from him."

"Oh! God be praised!" the woman ejaculated, clasping her hands and raising her eyes towards heaven. Then she caught her brother-in-law by the arm, and while the tears of gratitude started down the long, silken lashes of her strangely brilliant eyes, she cried,—

"He will come home! He will come to save our child! Oh! Bion will not be an orphan in the great, dark world! He will come home—he will—he will come, my brother?"

"I am sure he will," returned the brother, who had wiped his hard eyes until they had become red and humid. "But it may be some months yet; for he had much business to do when this man left."

"But he will come! My boy will not be fatherless. He will have some one to guide him through the dangerous track of early youth."

"My sister," said the brother-in-law, in a low, careful tone, "your hopes will be answered I am sure. Yet you should not cast such an imputation upon my love."

"Imputation, brother?"

"By intimating that your sweet child could be friendless in the world. Do you suppose that I would accept a single bounty from Heaven that my brother's child could not fully share? I know you must feel peculiarly happy to believe that Gideon will return; but—pardon me for the words—they are true, and I must speak them—your child shall not need the love of a father while I live; and when the first pangs of his bereavement are passed, he shall turn his heart to me, and love me as though he were of my very flesh and blood."

The mother bowed her head, and a shudder crept through her frame. Strange that the words which the brother had meant should be the most effective of all he had yet said—should be the first to strike upon her soul unpleasantly. They fairly startled her—so much so that she gazed quickly into the speaker's face to see if he had changed. But when she came to reflect she explained it all to herself. She had felt thus because there was something chilling in the thought that her child should grow up and owe all his love and gratitude to those who were strangers at his birth!

"My brother," she said, after she had overcome the first force of the emotion, "I did not mean that. You know what I meant. You know what must be a mother's feelings."

"O—yes, Belinda. And I only meant to assure you of my love by what I said; I meant no blame."

After this there was a silence of some minutes. Christopher Huntley got up and walked to the window; and as he gazed out into the street he seemed quite uneasy. And the invalid, too, seemed ill at ease. What was it that thus touched them nearly alike? Was it the thought that some preparation must be made in view of the approaching dissolution? Most likely.

By and by Christopher Huntley sat down again by the side of his brother's wife. His face had assumed a very serious look; and a close observer could have discovered that he was anxious and fearful.

"My sister," he said, taking her right hand in both of his, and looking into her face, "however much we may dislike to introduce business into such a connection, yet it must be done. You know that you must soon pass away. You leave a child not five years old; and you leave, too, a large amount of property. What shall be done with it until your husband returns?"

The woman started, and drawing her hand away she raised it to her face.

"I know the subject is a painful one, my beloved sister; but it is at the same time an important one. When you are gone your sweet child must not be left without a legal protector. You know that my love would lead me to be a father to him, and that I would cherish and protect him as the very centre of my joys. Yet all this may not be. If you die without making any disposition of your child, the court may do it for you; and thus a total stranger may come in and take the object of our love, and rule him with a rod of iron!"

A low cry of pain burst from the mother's lips, and a fearful shudder shook her frame.

"Oh! that must not be. I have thought of this—I have thought of it much," she said, eagerly; "and several times I have tried to speak with you upon the subject, but my courage failed me. I feared to ask you to help me in this."

"*Feared?*" repeated the man, in a tone of apprehension.

"I feared to ask you to assume such a burden. I know you love us; but still that may be no reason why you should burden yourself with a helpless child. Yet his father may return soon. You may not have the burden long. Oh—if I dared to ask you to be his guardian until Gideon comes home——"

Christopher Huntley turned away his head. He was obliged to do it; for he dared not let the mother see the look of sudden exultation which had gleamed out upon his face. As soon as he could subdue the outer emotion he said—

"I will not chide you, Belinda, for I appreciate your delicacy; but still I must say that you have been very wrong. You have not only wronged yourself most, but you have wronged me. However, I am thankful that you have spoken so freely at length; and in place of further remark on that head let us look further into the business we have now reached. I have no children of my own, my roving life having prevented me from being married. But I love children—I love children, because they are children—and how much the more shall I love a child which is almost my own? My own in love, Bion surely is. Let him be mine in fact until his father returns. I have made such arrangements in my business that I shall have a permanent home hereafter. If you must leave us, let me have the charge of Bion until *he* shall return who has the best right to his care. I have plenty—my means are ample—so fear not on that account."

"No, no, my brother," quickly cried Belinda, touched by his kindness, his seeming tenderness, and generosity. "No, no—you shall not do that. I shall leave behind me—belonging to my husband, of course, but mine while he is away—over two hundred thousand dollars, besides the hotel in New Orleans. Do you think I would allow you to draw from your own purse under such circumstances?"

"Why," said Christopher, with a cheerful smile, which did more in advancing his cause than did his words, "as for that we may as well speak plainly as to hide anything. Were I to promise you to take all the dear boy's expenses from your funds I might not like to do it. I might much prefer to draw upon myself than upon your banker. Shall I tell you why?"

"Of course."

"Then—plainly—there are different ideas of the expense necessary to the education of a child. My first and highest object would be, to keep him in the path of strict virtue and truth. And I would do this through love and gentleness, and—permit the egotism—through good example. Ah! how few realise the full power of kindness over the mind of the child. Rather than put a child of mine under the care of one who could be harsh and severe towards him, I would have him sent to some asylum, where a solitary life might at least keep him from the contaminating influence of ill-nature. Every harsh, ungenerous word spoken to a child is one step towards making harsh its own heart.——

"Ha, ha, ha—I am leaving the main subject in a strange manner. Let's see—where was I?"

"You said there were different ideas touching the ——"

"O—yes—I remember. Yes. I said there were different ideas of the expense necessary to the education of a child. Now I believe in gratifying the tastes and wants of a child in a degree to be regulated by our means. Had I a child under my charge, I could not be happy in seeing one little wish unsatisfied. So I might draw more heavily on your bankers than they would deem necessary. No, no," he added, with another of those manufactured smiles, "I would rather be my own banker, and then I and my banker would be sure to have no misunderstanding. I have enough. More than I can ever use for myself—so be under no apprehensions on that score."

Happy mother! Happy in thought at that moment—happy in ignorance of the serpent-tongue that whispered to her—happy in the belief that a black heart was pure as an angel's! Happy mother! She caught her relative's hand; and, while a new light, springing from a new thought, gleamed upon her face, she said—

"I have it now, brother. It may be more care upon your shoulders; but for me—for your brother—for our child, you will accept the trust. All the property—every penny—is deposited in my name. It is all mine, to do with it as I please. I shall leave my boy with more hope and confidence if I know that all is in the charge of his kind uncle. Oh! say that you will accept the trust. Do not disappoint me in this."

Again that dark man turned away his head. He dared not let the mother see his face. It was too plainly stamped with exultant joy. He struggled a few moments, as a man might struggle to repress a sigh, and then spoke—

"Belinda, I am your slave in all that appertains to the welfare of your darling boy. Lay your commands upon me, and they shall be obeyed. If you would like for me to take charge of the property until my brother returns, I will do so with pleasure. I will call in an attorney to-morrow, and have the whole business transacted at once; for, though you should live out the time bounded by my prayers and hopes, which would see your head grey, and your step infirm with the weight of years, yet if there is business to be done 'twere better to have done at once, and then we shall be prepared for any emergency."

"You are right, brother. If you will bring an attorney to-morrow we can have it all done. As you say, such business should be done at once. O—I feel much relieved. I have been troubled much with the thought of what should become of Bion after I am gone. It may be that his father will never return. If he should not, then what—what would become of my boy! There is no one in New Orleans with whom I could leave him. No friend, I mean, who would be more to me than any mere acquaintance. And then his money would be where it might be kept from him at the very time he might most need it. But now all is over of that difficulty. I am easy once more. My boy will be with one who loves him because *he is my boy*; and his money will be in the hands of one who will know how to use it for him to the advancement of his real happiness as well as his proper education. My brother—I thank thee kindly; and may God reward thee!"

There was a slight prick upon the man's conscience as these last words dropped from his sister-in-law's lips; but the effect was not lasting. He soon overcame it, and the twinge was gone. He looked at his watch, and said he had no idea it was so late. He had business which must be attended to before night.

"But I will come to-morrow," he added.

"And you will bring the attorney?"

"Yes, my sister. I know an honest, industrious man, who will be just the hand. He is eccentric in some things; but a warm heart underlies his nature. I will bring him. Keep yourself quiet and easy. Sleep well; and, if possible, let me see you on the gaining hand to-morrow."

And so the dark man kissed the mother's hand once more, and then passed out. In the lower hall he met Bion.

"My son, how do you do?"

The child started at the sound of the voice; and as he gazed up into the dark face he looked frightened. Those two black eyes carried his mind at once to that terrible monarch of the lower world, of whom he had read in mystical legends! The feeling was upon him, and he could not shake it off. Was it strange?

CHAPTER III.

A DEEP PLOT

Only a few doors from Wall street, on one of the narrow ways which lead to the southward from that present mart of money and stocks, at the time of which we write stood a quaint wooden structure, devoted to offices for all sorts of professions. The building has long since passed away—whether by fire, or by the hand of the demolisher who precedes the builder we cannot tell. But there it stood, in the day of the events we are recording, and there it seemed to have stood for long years. Its old gables had a tumble-down look even then, and its roof was moss-covered, and green with vegetation. It stood back from the street, having a small yard in front, which was lumbered with old boxes and boards, and with all sorts of refuse matters which the various occupants had cast out as worthless and in the way—the only clear place being the sunken and uneven brick walk that led from the gate to the heavily porticoed door.

Up the winding, worn, and creaking stairs we go—up one, two, and three stories—where we come to a dark, square hall, lighted once by means of a glass scuttle, but now owing all its illumination to the presence of three narrow cracks left in the boards with which the scuttle had been covered. When it rained the rain and the light came in together; but then the water dripped off down the stairway, and thus did harm to no one. Leading from this little square hall are four doors, opening into four rooms, which occupy the four gables of the building. We take the one that overlooks the back yard;—or, we turn to the door of that room,—and upon the middle rail we see a strip of stout pasteboard, bearing the name, in black capitals:—

BARRABAS LATTIMORE,
ATTORNEY AT LAW.

The interior of the office was somewhat lighter than was the hall, but yet not so light as it might have been had the window been cleared of the dust and cobwebs which lay and hung there, seemingly the accumulation of ages. In one corner, where it could have all the light of the window, stood an old desk, covered with a dingy piece of stuff which might once have been cloth; said cloth being again covered with old books and old papers. In the opposite corner stood a dumpy sort of a secretary, the upper part of which was filled with dirty books, while below was a leaf supplied with writing materials. This was to accommodate business visitors. The rest of the furniture consisted of an old chest of drawers, which stood near the door; four chairs, and a small wash-stand.

And at the first-mentioned desk sat Barrabas Lattimore, Esquire. He was in perfect keeping with the rest of the fixtures. In frame he was tall and gaunt; his head was low and narrow, and half covered with a sort of dingy, snuff-colored hair, which enjoyed a perfect independence of all painful manipulations of combs and brushes; and that narrow, low-topped, bald head was further adorned with a pair of ears that seemed to have been cut out originally for wings; but, finding that they would not work, they had been abandoned while on a full spread, and thus left. The first thought of an observing man would naturally be, that those ears were about to flap and fly away with the head. And this thought would be rendered the more reasonable by the long, lank neck, which seemed almost divided by the dirty cravat that was bound about it.

The face of Barrabas Lattimore was a curious one. Beneath a pair of shaggy, snuff-colored brows, were two eyes that seemed to be searching for light within the head. They were deeply sunken, and twisted at that—never looking straight into any human face, and seeming to be looking the farthest off when turned in fact the most directly upon you. Their color was of a greenish grey, and seemed darker than it really was on account of their being sunken in so far from the light of day. The nose was thin, and hooked like the beak of a vulture; the upper lip very long; the mouth wide—so wide that the upper part of the head appeared to be coming off when he opened it; the nether lip rather heavy, and hanging away from the teeth and gum; while the chin was prominent only in its sharpness and projection outward.

His dress was in keeping with all the rest of the man. It was all black;—or, had once been,—and had been worn until it really seemed as though the dirt had been gathering, and the fabric wearing, until now the whole was nothing but a glossy, discolored garb of dirt, held together by the glutinous nature of the particles. The coat was long in the skirts, with a waist only reaching a few inches below the arms, and with a high stiff collar that seemed a sort of protection and rest for the gander-like neck. The waistcoat reached some inches below the body of the coat, and was buttoned to the throat; while the breeches, which fitted closely, displayed sundry patches, which were shown plainly by the creases in the dirt that had assumed the place of the original cloth.

One feature more, and you have Barrabas Lattimore, *in propia persona*. His hands were well worth a moment's notice. Attached to a pair of arms of inordinate length, they were a perfect type of their owner's character. The palms were thin and deeply creased, with a sort of nervous, itchy expression; while the long, bony fingers, exactly like the talons of some huge bird of prey, were never laid together when the hand was open, but kept apart, and all hooked in, ready to grasp the first object that should come within their reach. See them now, as they rest upon the desk. See the great cords and the veins stand out. See them resting there, half open and spread,—like traps set for rats—trembling and nervous—itching with an old, continuous, and insatiable desire—all ready to close, like a vice, upon the first human heart that shall fall in his way beneath a golden pocket!

It was early in the day that Barrabas Lattimore sat there in his office, with his strange hands spread upon his desk; and he seemed to be reading over the titles of some papers that lay before him,—not reading them with a present interest, but seeming rather to go back with them into the regions of a far-off memory where he saw curious things. Suddenly he started to an upright posture, and his ear was turned towards the door. His hands were brought to his knees, and opened wider than before.

Yes—some one was ascending the creaking stairs. He instantly gathered up the papers, and swept them into a drawer, which was closed and locked. He had just accomplished this when there came a rap upon the door. He arose and glided forward like a cat. It might be a rat outside,—or, it might be some other bit of game which must not be frightened. The key was turned in the lock—Barrabas never left that door so that a stranger could come in upon him unexpectedly—and the way was opened.

It was a stout, well-dressed man who had demanded admittance; and he entered at once, closing the door himself behind him.

Some people might have been offended at that movement; but not so Barrabas Lattimore. He saw in the act an air of secresy. He saw that his visitor aimed at safety, and knew how to secure it. Those were the sort with whom he loved to deal; and a secret was to him an augury of profit.

"Is Mr. Lattimore in?" the visitor asked, not yet able to distinguish objects clearly by the dim light.

"That is my name, sir," the attorney answered, gazing sharply into the other's face.

"Ah—yes—I begin to see now. Yes—yes—I recognize you now. Don't you remember me, sir?"

"I think I have seen you," replied Barrabas, speaking very slowly, as though he would not express himself too freely. He evidently recognized the man at first, for he had been moved by a slight, startled emotion as soon as he obtained a fair view of the face. But he knew very well that some men wish not to be known. People of respectable standing who visited him seldom came upon fair and honorable business, and hence they often chose to remain incog. Barrabas never recognized a client in the street; nor did he ever recognize one upon his first business meeting.

"But don't you know me?", the visitor pursued, pulling one of the heavy oaken chairs up near to the desk, and sitting down.

"I couldn't call you by name, sir, I am sure."

"Well—that's curious. You and I once had a business transaction."

"Ah!" uttered Barrabas, hiding the start, and shading his face with a dirty handkerchief under the ostensible purpose of blowing his beak.

"I came on from the West, you remember? pursued the visitor.

"Ah—from the West?" repeated the attorney.

"Yes. Don't you remember?"

"Why—I have so many visitors that I cannot remember them all. Your countenance is familiar; and I am sure we have met before."

"And that's all, is it?"

"That —is—all."

"I took Barrabas Lattimore for a brighter man," said the visitor, rather impatiently.

"Ah! Did you mean in that former interview, on the twenty-seventh of August, four years ago, that our business relations were to continue for all time, sir?"

The stout visitor was non-plussed. He extended his hand and took the cold, iron-like claw of the attorney.

"You are right," he said, with a smile. "You are perfectly right. But I have more business now, on hand. A business to which that old affair will compare only as child's play."

"Aha! Now, *Christopher Huntley*, you talk!" cried the shark, in a tone which seemed to come from a huge bottle which was very near empty. "You are welcome, sir. But—suppose we lock this door?"

"It might be well."

Barrabas glided to the door and turned the key, and then resumed his seat.

"Are you prepared to state your case now?" he asked, holding his hands apart.

"Yes. I wish you to understand it fully, and at once. If you are faithful your fee shall be plump."

The bony hands were instantly brought together and rubbed, as though there was gold between them.

"I am all ears," he said.

Huntley could not help looking at those ears as their owner spoke. But he allowed no sign to appear upon his face of the peculiar thought suggested; and at once resumed,—

"You will listen attentively, for I wish you to understand me. When I visited you before I had a brother living, named Gideon. He was five years younger than myself. I had no other relative living that I know of. Away back, several generations, as nearly as I can trace the genealogy, our ancestors were sparce. My great-grandfather had only one child. That child married an orphan who knew of no relatives. His wife died shortly after her first child was born, and her husband never married again. That only child was my father. He went to New Orleans when young and married a handsome quadroon, the child of a freed woman. So of course she had no legal relatives, as she was an only child; or, at least the only one of whom anything is known. Gideon and myself, and one sister, were the only children. This sister died first; then my father and then my mother—all three swept off by an epidemic. Thus you will see that my brother, were he living, would have no relative but me."

"Is he not married?"

"That is another thing. I am now speaking only of *our* side. Of course I am, under such circumstances, his only living relative."

"Most assuredly," replied Barrabas, more emphatically than was usual with him. "The law could not find another."

'Then you understand that part?'

"I think I do, sir."

"Now listen to the next proposition: Six years ago my brother went to Havana, on the island of Cuba, and there married with a creole girl, named Belinda Cazalla. She was an orphan, with no relations living whom she knew. My brother returned to New Orleans with his wife, and the fruit of the union has been one son. If there have been any other children they did not live. On the first of January, twenty-one months ago, my brother's business required that he should go to China. He settled up all his affairs at home, and had all his property deposited or invested in his wife's name. This was to guard against accident."

"Against accident?" repeated the attorney, interrogatingly.

"I mean it was to guard against any trouble respecting her getting the property in case he should die while away."

"Ah—yes, I see now."

"Well," resumed Huntley, drawing his chair nearer to his hearer, and speaking more carefully,—"last spring,—sometime during the latter part of May—news came of my brother's death!"

"Aha!" uttered Barrabas, in a tone which sounded as though the bottle was nearer empty than before, and rubbing his hands more emphatically. He began to see through it!

"The circumstances were these: The ship in which my brother sailed never reached port with her crew alive. Her name was *The Golden Crescent*. About the time she must have entered the Chinese sea there was a long, heavy storm; and a week or so afterwards her hull was driven ashore upon Hong Kong. Her masts were gone; her boats gone; and, in short, everything had been swept away which the sea could reach. Four of the crew were found in the cabin, dead. Or, I would say—their bodies were found. The best had all been swept off!"

"Your brother's wife must have felt very badly," remarked the attorney, wasting no attempt at sympathy with one who knew him as his present visitor did.

"Ah," returned Christopher, "she didn't know it! She doesn't know it to this day!"

"How d'ye manage it?"

"The doctors managed it for me. She was in very delicate health; her nervous system all shattered, and consumption working upon her,—so they kept the news from her, and sent her off here as soon as possible. But she had intended to come north before this. No—she knows nothing of it."

"Then she thinks her husband will be home soon?"

"Yes—sometime between now and spring. But now comes the third propositson."

This time Huntley moved his chair still nearer, and his tone sank still lower.

"My sister-in-law can't live long. Not a week, I am sure. She is here in the city, and her son is with her. She is resigned. She told me yesterday that she must soon go. And she is anxious to have me take charge of her boy until her husband returns."

"And the property?"

"Of course."

"Until—her—husband—returns!" repeated Barrabas, slowly and meaningly. The bottle sounded very near empty.

"Yes—until he returns."

"Well, sir," said the attorney, as the other hesitated.

"You are prepared now to hear the whole, are you not?"

"I am."

"Probably you guess it?"

"I never guess."

"But you are ready to help me?"

"I shall *not fear* to help you!"

"Then listen: My brother is dead and gone. His wife holds in her own right over two hundred thousand dollars. She can live but a few days. When she dies, her son, five years old, will be the sole heir, as his father left a will to that effect."

"Go on, sir."

"Barrabas Lattimore," whispered Huntley, hoarsely, and with marked emphasis—"*I—want—that—money!*"

The attorney was not even moved. He had known this from the first mention of the child's existence. He replied calmly and coolly—

"That's easily done if you have patience and perseverance."

"I have both. But I wish to know how I must proceed."

"Do you wish to employ me, sir?" the attorney asked.

"Of course I do. Why should I have come here and told you this story if I did not mean to employ you?"

"O—people often seek information, and then go off and work for themselves."

"Are you a natural-born fool? Do you suppose ——"

"Stop, stop, my dear sir," interrupted Barrabas, losing not a particle of his coolness. "You are aiming at a very large fortune. I am willing to help you—*professionally!*"

"Ah—I see," remarked Huntley, after gazing into his companion's face awhile. "You wish to know what your share is to be."

"That is generally the manner of doing business; and as information—*legal* information—is a very essential part of a counsel's services it should be paid for. I am plain, sir."

And so he was; for he knew his man.

"And I will be plain, too," responded Huntley. "Will you set your price?"

"I would rather you would propose your own terms. You know just how much you will gain."

"Well—I'll give you five thousand dollars to see me through."

"Remember," said Barrabas, with a dubious shake of the head, "there is more than mere work here. Though, perhaps, I may not have fully understood you. *There is an heir in the way, you know!*"

Christopher Huntley gazed into the attorney's face, and though he was not startled by the meaning remark, yet he was evidently moved thereby.

"I know," he said; "and I *hoped* you might have means of helping me to dispose of that obstacle."

"Perhaps I have. But I can tell better when I know the disposition you will make."

"There is but one," returned Christopher, quickly. "I tell you plainly that I would not have the child sent off after his parents. He is young—so young, that at the age of twelve he will have no recollection of circumstances in the present save the more startling and prominent. He will probably remember some things."

He stopped and pondered awhile, with his eyes bent upon the middle button of Lottimore's waistcoat. Finally, he looked up and asked:—

"What should you think: Will a man remember as well as a child? I mean—will a boy twelve years old remember things that happened between four and five that he would forget at forty?"

Barrabas bent his head, and rested his narrow brow upon two of his long fingers. It was a new subject to him, but he was a pretty clear thinker. He was sure now of a price for his work, and he was willing.

"I think," he said, raising his head, and lowering his hands to his knees, "that a boy of twelve will remember many things which would be entirely forgotten at maturity. I am confident that each succeeding year shuts out some recollection of childhood."

"I hardly think so," remarked the other. "But yet your first proposition is evidently correct. I have experimented some of late, and I am satisfied that a child may be so trained that from the age of four and a half years to that of twelve he shall have forgotten all facts save those of a physical character. He may remember startling events, but will have no connected knowledge."

"Experimented, you say?" gurgled Barrabas.

"Yes. I have questioned several children, and I find a difference. Some remember many things which happened at the age of four, while others have no recollection at all of that period in their existence. But I have found that those who hold this recollection have not only quite ready wit, but they seem to have been led to refer often to that distant time. From all this I have made up my mind that if this boy—ready and keen as he is—should be now put under the proper influence, he might, by the time he is twelve, be made to believe any theory of his origin I may choose to have impressed upon him."

Mr. Lattimore's distant eyes sent an intelligent gleam from out their mystic depths, and, as soon as he saw that he must speak, he said,—

"I am sure of that."

"And perhaps you understand me now?" suggested the visitor.

"If you were to state your plan, fully and clearly—commencing at the beginning, and ending with the end—telling just the plan—no more, no less—without explanation or note—I should understand it surely, and we could then talk. Come—that's the best way. You understand me now—I *partly* understand you. Commence at the commencement, ye know."

"What commencement do you mean?" inquired Huntley. He did not seem to be at all put out by the request. He knew it was a curious case, and that a man must understand it fully before he entered into it with any idea of work.

"I mean, simply—just the work you want done—not what you will do—not what I will do—but, what—is—to—be—done."

"Ah—I see. Look. This woman is going to die. That is settled. Then I go on thus: I must be legal guardian of the child. Then I must have him put somewhere so that he shall forget me, if possible; but, at all events, so that he shall forget the facts of his birth; his early childhood; his mother's station; also forget all about New Orleans, and his father's having gone to sea. And his name, too, he must forget."

"That's impossible."

"What?"

"His name?"

"You misunderstand me. I mean his family name. I mean that he shall bear the Christian name still. He wouldn't, of course, forget that."

"Ah—right—he'll forget that—family name—yes. Go on."

"Hem—listen—"

"I am listening—thinking, too. Go on."

"Then—if he forgets all this, at the age of twelve, I shall come and claim to be his father, and send him off to sea. I have had my wits about me. You see I have shaved off my whiskers. I shall wear them then. But even if he remembers me, which I think he will, the transformation will bother him. He'll have a recollection of me, but not distinct; and when I claim to be his father, he wont dispute it.

"I am all ears. Go on." Bottle very near empty.

"Well—you see it very near the end now. Of course he'll go to sea—he'll stay at sea—and as for me he'll never see me again from that day."

"*And still the heir lives!*" said Barrabas, in a strange whisper.

"O—ah—I forgot that," cried Huntley, quickly, and with earnestness. "That is very simple. At the first favorable opportunity *Bion Huntley will die and be buried in a public manner*. Do you see?"

"Perhaps not as you see," was the meaning answer.

"You are acquainted with many poor families. We can easily *buy a dead boy!*"

"I see now, sir," said Barrabas. "I see your aim. Let me think."

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

A RESOLUTION.

BY ALICE CARY.

I have told the winds my sorrow,
  I have told them o'er and o'er,
But they never stop to sing for me,
  Or to kiss me any more.

I have made the moon acquainted
  With all my gloomy fear,
But still she stays among the stars,
  And leaves me lonesome here.

I ask the larks to mourn with me
  That ever I was born,
But they fly away and hide their heads
  In the red wings of the morn.

So I will go about my house
  With cheerful heart and eyes,
And fill life's possibility
  With the strength that in me lies.

THE FOILED TEMPTER.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"Don't urge me, Henry," said Mrs. Hewling to her young, intelligent, good-looking husband, "I cannot go. With me, as you well know, all such gay pleasures are at an end."

"I urge you, Anna, dear," said Mr. Hewling, speaking very tenderly, and smoothing with his hand, as he spoke, the dark glossy hair from which she had removed every sign of a curl, and parted smoothly away towards the white temple—"for two reasons. One, because I think this continued seclusion of yourself wrong and injurious to your state of mind: and the other, because I do not wish to go alone to General Malcolm's. More than half my pleasure is lost, in any company, by your absence."

"It is impossible!" Mrs. Hewling answered, and there was just a sign of impatience in her voice as she spoke; "and I wonder that you can so urge me. Am I not still in black?"

"Lay aside your black, dear." Mr. Hewling's tone lost not a single shade of affection. "You have worn it too long already. Nay—it should never have gathered like a gloomy death curtain aronnd you, shadowing both mind and body as it has done. Lay your black aside."

"Never!" said Mrs. Hewling, almost indignantly. "When we buried our little Flora, the light of joy died in my heart, and the darkness of a perpetual mourning gathered around my spirit. I shall never lay it aside."

The hand of Mr. Hewling was removed from the glossy hair of his wife, and, with a suppressed sigh, he stepped back from her a pace or two.

"Don't let my remaining at home, keep you from General Malcolm's," said Mrs. Hewling, in a cold way. "I have no wish to deprive you of any enjoyment."

"If I had not promised to meet an old friend there, I would not go," replied Mr. Hewling. "As it is, my word binds me."

He did not say, as he might have done, that it was a lady friend, and one to whom he wished to present his wife.

"Go, by all means. I would be selfish to wish to deprive you of a single pleasure," Mrs. Hewling said, in a sad kind of way.

And Mr. Hewling did go; not, however, with any pleasurable anticipations. It was now over a year since death claimed their youngest born, a babe whose life had numbered only a few months. This was the mother's first grief—her first experience in sorrow, and she bowed her head refusing to be comforted. Ever since that time, she had been sitting in darkness; and she would suffer no one—not even her husband—to lead her forth into the cheerful sunlight.

Mr. Hewling was a man of social feeling, and one who took pleasure in friendly intercourse. His wife's gloomy state of mind, and her entire seclusion of herself, deprived him of one of his life's truest enjoyments—for he never cared to go into company unless she were with him. On the present occasion he went with more than his usual reluctance. He not only loved his wife, but was proud of her; and, as she was a handsome woman, of refined tastes and cultivated intellect, he naturally felt desirous to see her in comparison with other women—that comparison being always so favorable to her, at least in his estimation. Such fond pride in a husband, may be classed with virtues instead of weaknesses. Wives, at least, will approve the sentiment, while others may smile, and say, good-humoredly—"An amiable weakness."

To the lady-friend—an old favorite of Mr. Hewling's, and one who, ere his choice was made, came near winning the highest place in his affections—he felt particularly desirous of presenting his wife. But he was forced to go to the entertainment at General Malcolm's alone.

It was over three years since Mr. Hewling had seen Miss Lightner, the old friend to whom we have referred, and the meeting was one of pleasure on both sides. The lady had gained womanly attractions during that period, and now met her former friend, and almost lover, in the beauty of maturer charms. The girlish lightness of her character had given way to a dignified bearing that imparted something noble to her manners; and the ripeness of a cultivated intellect, added to personal graces of no common order, threw around her a web of fascinations that made her a centre of attraction in all companies.

Ere Mr. Hewling was aware of it, he was so drawn within the circle of her influence as to be an admirer. "How wonderfully she has improved! Into what a charming woman she has grown!" he said to himself almost enthusiastically.

And then his thoughts ran back to the time when, in contrast with the sweet maiden he had chosen for wife, her charms failed in power over him, and all the wealth of his pure love was given to another. Alas! that the contrast left a different impression now!

"Is Mrs. Hewling present?" asked Miss Lightner, soon after their meeting. "I have not had the pleasure, you know, of making her acquaintance."

The eyes of Miss Lightner were on the face of her old friend, reading every shade of expression. She saw an instant change.

"She is not here," replied Mr. Hewling, almost sighing as he spoke.

"Not sick, I hope." Miss Lightner's gaze was most penetrating. A suspicion had flashed across her mind that the marriage of her old friend had not proved congenial, and she was looking for the signs of disappointment. Of all the men with whom she had enjoyed an intimate acquaintance, she had admired Mr. Hewling most; and had he chosen her from among the maidens, and asked her to stand beside him at the altar, she would have linked unhesitatingly her fortunes with his. As it was, she had declined many offers, because those who sought her love fell below the manly ideal up to which her perceptions had been raised.

"Sick in mind," replied Mr. Hewling. "It is over a year since we lost a babe, and ever since that time my wife has been sitting in darkness. I cannot dispel the gloom that surrounds her, nor win her from her shadowed seclusion into the cheerful sunlight. I did hope that she would accompany me here this evening, so that you might meet and be friends. But I am disappointed."

The tones of Mr. Hewling expressed even more regret than his words.

"How much I should have been pleased to make her acquaintance," said the young lady, with something of her old warmth and familiarity of manner, and in a tone that gave a pleasant motion to the feelings of her old acquaintance. Then she gradually led the conversation into another channel, and so charmed him with the graces of a rarely cultivated intellect, that the hours flew by on such light pinions, that he scarcely noted their passage. Almost through the entire evening they were together. Once Miss Lightner danced, and then Mr. Hewling was her partner. She plead fatigue in declining the hand of another gentleman, who asked her to join in a subsequent cotillion. So interested were they with each other as to occasion remark.

"How long will you remain in the city?" inquired Mr. Hewling, as he noticed that more than half the company had retired, and saw by his watch that swift-footed time had carried them far past the hour of midnight.

"For some weeks," was answered.

"Have you been to the opera yet?"

"No."

"Then you must hear Gazzaniga," said Mr. Hewling.

"That is one of the pleasures in reserve for me. And it will be a high pleasure, as I am passionately fond of music," said Miss Lightner.

"Are you engaged for to-morrow evening?"

"No."

There was a brief pause. "How will it look for me to be seen at the opera with Miss Lightner, and my wife at home, hiding herself from the world in a grief that will not admit of consolation?" He did not wait to answer the question to his own satisfaction, but obeying impulse instead of reason, said—

"May I have the pleasure of your company? She sings in Il Trovatore."

"The temptation is too great for me to answer no," replied the lady, throwing into her smile a fascination that gave to her countenance a new beauty in the eyes of Mr. Hewling.

"I have promised an old friend whom I met at General Malcolm's to take her to the opera this evening," said Mr. Hewling to his wife, on the next day.

"Have you?" Mrs. Hewling glanced towards her husband with a look of surprise. "Who is she?"

"The lady of whom I have already spoken. Her name is Miss Lightner. I so much regretted your absence from General Malcolm's last evening. I wanted you to meet each other."

Mrs. Hewling sighed, and the light of an awakening interest, which had come into her face, lost itself among the old shadows.

"Won't you go with us this evening? Say yes, Anna! It will be such a pleasure to me." The husband spoke with ardor.

"How strange it is that you will urge me in this way," answered Mrs. Hewling, with enough of fretfulness in voice and manner, to give her an unlovely aspect in the eyes of her husband. In the same instant, the more attractive face of Miss Lightner intruded itself, in contrast, and with the distinctness of a living presence.

Mr. Hewling said nothing more. The case seemed hopeless. Something of coldness, and something of alienation were so distinctly perceived, that he turned, with an involuntary movement, partly away from his wife.

There was in the heart of Mrs. Hewling a new, strange, and uncomfortable feeling, after her husband left her on that evening to attend the opera with Miss Lightner, a lady whom she had never seen, and of whose person and character she had no distinct image or perception. It was something unusual for her husband to be away from home for two evenings in succession; and his absence left her so lonely, and her spirit so restless, that she wandered, uneasily, from room to room, or sat still and wept, unable to trace the cause of tears. More unhappy hours than these she had never spent, and when, long after midnight, her husband came home, she threw herself, sobbing, upon his bosom. With loving words, that had in them a tone of reproof, he sought to calm this turbulence of feeling. To him the transition was unpleasing, and tended to increase the slight coldness and alienation of which we have spoken. He had just parted from one of the most fascinating women he had ever met; from one, who, either from weak pride, or evil design, had sought to snare him with her beauty; and had returned to his wife, who, instead of wisely seeking to adapt herself to the social necessities of his nature, had, in a weak and selfish grief, veiled from him the loveliness of her true character, and let him go forth alone into the world to have his eyes dazzled by the glare of false attractions. We make no justification in his case. He was human—and humanity is weak. It is with things as they are that we now deal; and let the reader take them as they are.

Before parting with Miss Lightner, on attending her home from the opera, Mr. Hewling made an engagement to go with her to hear Linda on the next evening but one. He did not mention the engagement to his wife; for he had a feeling as if it were hardly right for him to go a second time to so public a place as the opera with this charming young lady.

Mrs. Malcolm, the wife of General Malcolm, was an old friend of Mrs. Hewling's mother. She was a clear-seeing, true-hearted woman, and much attached to Mrs. Hewling, whom she had often sought to win from her self-imposed seclusion. On the day following this first visit to the opera, she called upon Mrs. Hewling, whom she found in a more than usually depressed state of mind. She had a duty to perform, and she had come with that end, and meant to do it faithfully. What little she had seen of the brilliant Miss Lightner, impressed her unfavorably; and when she learned Mr. Hewling was with her at the opera on the night following the party at her house, and that they seemed more attentive to each other than to the music, she at once decided as to her own action in the case. To the young mother's "lost darling" she first turned her thoughts. That was a theme on which Mrs. Hewling most loved to dwell, and in contemplating which she always indulged in the luxury of tears.

"Your precious babe is not lost, only saved, and forever safe, in the mansions of our Heavenly Father," said Mrs. Malcolm. "But there is a loss which you may suffer, Anna, that will be without hope here or hereafter."

"If the soul is lost, then——"

"I mean not that," said Mrs. Malcolm, interrupting the speaker. There was a pause, and then she added—

"What if you were to lose your husband's love?"

The face of Mrs. Hewling turned instantly pallid, for there was a tone prophetic of evil in the voice of her friend.

"How did you win his love?" calmly, yet very earnestly did Mrs. Malcolm speak. "By sighs, and tears, and a sorrowful hiding of yourself away? By the gathering of mourning weeds around you; and sitting down among the ashes of grief—refusing to be comforted? Was it in this way that you won his love? If so, then, in this way may you hope to retain the priceless treasure! If not, look to it that you become not unlovely in his eyes! I marvel, and have long marvelled, Anna, at your folly, and I now utter a cry of warning in your ears ere it be too late!"

With lips apart, eager eyes, and face like ashes, Mrs. Hewling gazed with a frightened look upon her monitor.

"What do you mean? Speak plainly!" she gasped. "Is anything wrong? Your words are like sharp arrows, piercing to the very life-fountains!"

"Yes, something *is* wrong! Very wrong!" answered Mrs. Malcolm. "For more than a year you have held your social, cheerful-minded husband away from congenial life, because you cherished a selfish and rebellious grief in your heart, instead of being thankful to your Father in heaven for having given your sweet babe an eternal home among the angels. In that you have wronged him. And now, hopeless of any change in you, he has stepped again into the outer world, and, at once, his attractive qualities have drawn to his side those who, were you with him in the beauty and charm of your real character, could gain no power over him, but who——"

Mrs. Malcolm did not finish the sentence, for a more death-like pallor was overspreading the face of Mrs. Hewling.

"Anna," she spoke in a gentler way, and with less of fearful portent in her voice, "Anna, my dear young friend! it is not too late. You possess the love of as true and noble a heart as ever beat in manly bosom—a love, long tried, and, forgive me for saying it, sadly wronged. But the time has come when that love is to be severely tempted. Do you know Miss Lightner?"

"I never met her," replied Mrs. Hewling, in a husky voice.

"If rumor be true, there was a time when she bore to you the relation of rival. But, as the issue proved, an unsuccessful one. Rumor also says that she has refused many offers since, and that she has been heard to remark, that, when she meets another man like your husband, she will marry. Now, Anna, when I tell you that she is a woman of remarkable beauty, and of most winning manners; and that, as I read her, is using her utmost power to fascinate your husband, I need not add that there is danger in your path—but a danger that your own hand can sweep aside *now*, as a thing lighter than gossamer. Let it remain, make no effort to be to your husband what you once were, and a giant's strength may not remove it."

Much more, in the same earnest spirit, did this true friend urge upon Mrs. Hewling, and she was successful in her effort to make her comprehend, in its broadest sense, the error into which a mere selfish grief had led her, and the fearful peril of all that was dearest in life.

The day to Mr. Hewling was one of the most restless he had spent for a long time. He felt dissatisfied with himself; and, when thought turned towards his wife, old, tender emotions did not stir in his bosom. There seemed to be a darker shadow upon his home, while all the world, from which he was held back, seemed garmented in sunshine. Sober reflection had presented to his mind certain aspects of his relation to Miss Lightner, that were not agreeable to contemplate, and he regretted his hasty engagement with her for a second evening at the opera.

Mr. Hewling returned home almost an hour earlier than usual. As he ascended the steps of his dwelling he caught a momentary glimpse of a lady near one of the parlor windows, dressed in brown silk, and wearing a tasteful lace cap. There was something familiar in her appearance; yet he had failed to recognize her, as only a portion of her features was seen. Opening the street door, he passed through the vestibule, and was going by the parlors, when the brown silk dress and lace cap intercepted him, and a face no longer draped in sadness, and a pair of eyes from which the veil was removed, looked lovingly, as of old, into his own.

"Anna!" he exclaimed, with such a tone of surprise and pleasure in his voice, that the heart of his wife leaped for joy. "Dear Anna! Is it you?"

And he kissed her with a new and lover-like ardor.

"Ah," he added, his face alive with smiles, as he gazed fondly upon her still beautiful countenance—"how the old times and the old feelings come rushing back upon me! I have found my wife again!"

And he gathered his arms around her, and drew her in a strong pressure to his bosom.

"With so much to be thankful for," he said, as with his arm around her waist, Mr. Hewling moved with his wife to a sofa in the parlor, and sat down by her side, "with so beautiful and bright a world around us, why should we mourn for that which is lost? Why should one sorrow quench the light of a thousand stars—nay, even of the sun itself?"

"Selfish sorrow is always wrong," answered Mrs. Hewling; "and mine has been a selfish one. In mourning for the happy dead I have forgotten my duty to the living. Forgive me, dear Henry! I should have gone with you to General Malcolm's, and doubled your pleasures by sharing them!"

"You would have more than doubled them," said Mr. Hewling, with unusual warmth of manner. "And now," he added, "I must put your new-born purpose to the test. Will you go with me to the opera on to-morrow night?"

"I will," was the unhesitating answer.

"All right!" was the response of Mr. Hewling, made in a tone that half surprised his wife. She did not know, and never knew, that he had, only an hour before, received from Miss Lightner a note preferring a request by no means indecorous in itself, and seeming naturally to grow out of the brief renewal of their old acquaintance, yet really meant as a link in the chain she was forging with all a woman's art to bind him to her will. Suddenly the true meaning of that familiarly-worded note became clear. He saw the wicked wile, and shuddered at the danger to which he had been exposed.

On the next morning, Miss Lightner received from Mr. Hewling, this note—the one she had written was returned to her in the same envelope.

"An unexpected occurrence will prevent my keeping my engagement with Miss Lightner, this evening."

"Who is the lady sitting next to Mr. Hewling, in the box directly opposite?" It was Miss Lightner who asked the question. Her companion, after gazing at the lady for a moment or two, said,—

"That is his wife, I believe."

"I presume not. His wife dresses in black, I am told; and has, for a long time, rigidly secluded herself."

"She has laid aside her black, for to-night, then, and come forth from her seclusion," was answered, "for that is Mrs. Hewling herself. What a beautiful woman she is!"

Miss Lightner did not answer; but in her thought, she said "yea" to the last sentence. Mrs. Hewling was indeed beautiful; and her beauty had in it so much of a chastened, almost angelic purity, that she felt it to be an all-powerful spell for the heart of her husband.

Little of the music—little of the fine acting—did the foiled tempter hear or see, during the progress of the opera on that evening. She could not keep her eyes away from the lovely being who sat with such a womanly grace, by the side of her husband, and ever and anon leaned towards him, lovingly, as he spoke a few brief sentences in the pauses of the music. What were her spells, in comparison but silken strands on the limbs of a Samson!

"SO TIRED!"

BY MARY W. STANLEY GIBSON.

Weary of life? ah, no—but of life's woe;
  Weary of all its troubles and its cares!
Willing to rest—because so well I know
  What draughts the hand of Passion still prepares!

"*So* tired!"

A little child came panting in from play, the other night, and climbing into its mother's lap, laid its head upon her bosom, and uttered those two words. I saw the fond young mother brush the golden hair from the darling's moist forehead, and press her lips again and again to the flushed cheeks. The shadows of evening were falling fast around us, and the birds had already sung themselves to sleep. Little shoes and stockings were drawn off and laid aside—little weary feet bathed and cooled—a little night dress took the place of the pretty blue frock and white apron, and the boy was quiet. With a sigh of satisfaction he nestled closer in her arms; his blue eyes closed, and her cradle-song grew lower and lower as his breath came longer and more regularly through his parted lips. Happy sleep of childhood! She rose and went softly to her own room, to lay him in his little crib, and I was left alone. Heaven knows what memory of a time when I, too, was cradled upon a loving breast—when the dead mother, whose face I cannot remember, sung so to me in the twilight—came over me as I took up the infant's cry.

"*So* tired!"

A man of business—a man whose name is a bond on Wall street. Why should he lean his head upon his hand, and sigh as the words fall from his lips? Tired of his gay and busy life, of his elegant home, his fair daughters, and his fashionable wife? Tired of all these, and longing for the little red farm-house up among the hills of his native home, where he used to play, a bare-footed, light-hearted boy? Even so, strange as it may seem! Yet not so much for the farm-house, as for the happiness and innocence that staid behind with it, and which he can never hope to find in his dusty office, or his splendid home.

"*So* tired!"

She has been a loving wife and an indulgent mother. Six strong sons has she reared beside that cottage hearth, but the grave has claimed them all but two, and those the world has taken. The husband of her youth died long ago; and to-day, her sixtieth birth-day, she sits alone in the deserted homestead. To her boys she is "the old woman," to their brilliant wives "a good old thing, but *so* old-fashioned;" to their homes and their children almost a stranger. Her tears fall as she thinks of them in the distant city, gay, prosperous, wealthy and happy, yet not remembering her, on this day, even by a line, to say, "Dear mother, I love you." This is her reward for years of toil, and care, and anxiety. She has outlived her generation, and when she dies, she will hardly be missed by those to whom she has given health and strength, and life itself. Poor lonely old woman! Well may the bitter tears fall fast—well may you long to die! For this is often the return for love and devotion that have outwatched the stars, and seen the moon grow pale!

"*So* tired!"

Yes, turn from the brilliant crowd that listen eagerly for every word you utter, fair songstress, and heed what your heart is saying. Words of fire may fall from your rapid pen—your own wild soul may stamp its impress upon the page before you—the world may place the crown of laurel upon your bowed head—but it will be a diadem of thorns. In the height of triumph—in the fever of success—there will come a sudden pause, and the iron will enter your soul as you remember that one voice is silent, and one face still calm and cold. Fame, wealth, success—oh! what are these to happiness? Vanity—vanity all, and "vexation of spirit," and you bow your head and weep to think that it should be so!

Oh! little child, not yet released from thy mother's care, it would be better for thee to sink into the tranquil sleep of death, within the shelter of her arms, than to tread the path which we are treading! There are sharp thorns hidden among the fairest flowers—there are treacherous quicksands in the sweetest valleys. God help thee, boy, for only a hand from Heaven can lead thee safely there. The golden hair will turn to silver, it may be, and the blue eyes will wear an anxious look before the painful journey is half done, and evil shapes will mock and mutter when thy heart faileth thee, and thy steps are faint.

"*So* tired!"

My boy, cling closer to thy mother's breast! For a day will surely come when thy lips will utter those self-same words, and she will not be beside thee, to hush thee into forgetfulness of all thy trouble. God help thee, then, and lead thee to the only refuge "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest!"

SELF-LOVE.

I am not one of those who recognize self-abnegation as the only virtue. I believe we owe a great deal to ourselves, each of us—a great deal more than is generally admitted. I know this will be called heretical—nay, perhaps by a harder name. But for the life of me I cannot understand how any other nature has a right to absorb mine. It was given me to cherish, to cultivate agreeably to the highest possibilities I can compass—to fashion into the likeness of my conception of the divine image, and I have no right to neglect any of the processes of its education, and ultimate perfection. Why is my soul so full of independent wishes, if they are only planted there to be crushed down or rooted out? I do not mean that we are selfishly to thrust ourselves between the sunshine and our neighbor—never to reach out a helping hand, speak a word of kindness, or make wider our mantle of charity for the sake of the poor outcasts of the world—far from it—we are not to do less for others, but more for ourselves. Who knows the needs of my nature as I know them myself? Who can stretch me up to his stature, or who can crush me down to his? I suppose that my soul is as different from other souls as my form is different from other forms, and that another's garment would fit me as well as another's pleasures. I must seek for myself and determine for myself, what is best for me, and that shall meet and bring out of me what is best. A voice, small and still, but more fearful than thunder, tells me to come back when I trespass on another's grounds, for that his are as sacred to him as mine to me, and that my nature, though whole and separate, is so bound up in others, and with others, that to injure my brother is to injure myself, and to injure myself is to injure him. But whether or not I am to root up my fine cedar tree to make room for his black thorn, I myself claim the right of judging—else why have I judgment at all! The world of history is full of beautiful lessons of self-sacrifice, and we heed them all, for it is not selfishness, but self-love that I advocate. This mortality of mine is a wonderful and mysterious thing, involved in and reaching forward to a still higher wonder and mystery, and it becomes me to cherish it tenderly, to keep and care for it reverently, and not to suffer the dust of carelessness—the rust of sinfulness to efface the divine image and superscription. Every thing that makes men and women nobler is of the greatest importance, and though worldly treasures are nothing when laid up where moth and rust corrupt, they are invaluable when used to beautify and refine, and make excellent.

It is a mistake to suppose that untoward circumstances are of no importance—they are of the greatest importance when we are sufficiently wise to knead our gold into our clay. Men are too apt to be vulgarised by their wealth instead of making wealth their subordinate minister. It is thought by some persons that carelessness of apparel and negligence of surroundings are indexes of mental superiority. Not so, however. True, men and women may hang themselves all over with adornments that are, after all, but tawdry fineries—unbecoming as the train of a countess to a milk-maid—because they are simply hung on the outside, and not the out-growth from, and requisition of the nature within.

Do not, my dear reader, deceive yourself into believing it makes no difference whether you are tidily and prettily dressed or not, that it is all the same whether your house has a greasy wall, and a window looking out upon pools of stagnant dish-water, or whether the one be neat and respectable, and the other opening upon grass and flowers.

I am pleased to find my sentiments on this subject endorsed by Walter Savage Landor; he says: "I distrust both the intellect and the morality of those people to whom disorder is of no consequence—who can live at ease in an Augean Stable. What surrounds us reflects more or less that which is within us. The mind is like one of those dark lanterns which in spite of everything still throws some light around. If our tastes did not reveal our character, they would be no tastes, but instincts."

ALICE CARY.

MENTAL AND CRIMINAL EPIDEMICS.

We believe in mental and criminal epidemics. We believe they are intended to answer a beneficent end in the economy of Providence. We believe it to be a dispensation of mercy when Heaven deigns to spread before us, at a glance, the natural and horrible results of error and vice. Some new delusion, religious or otherwise, may arise. Straightway a multitude of minds are affected by it, and while argument is putting on its boots, and philosophy scratching its head, the figment has wrought its work in the face of the world; beholders start back with terror or disgust, and that matter is finished. If allowed to go on, slowly and insidiously mixing itself with truth, and fastening itself as a parasite upon vital facts, it might poison truth and poison men beyond recovery. But the epidemic saves all this, and God works out the problem by a sweep of the hand across the tablet, and error retires.

An epidemic of crime has its uses. It attracts attention, excites horror, and conveys its lesson. Nearly all the crimes, the accounts of which have burdened the press for the last six months, have grown out of the sins against chastity. We have had them in almost every form—running out into this development and that, springing from classes high and low, and showing that, in whatever forms existing, and involving whatever relations, licentiousness is a sin which poisons the soul, and, by its hot breath, ripens it for the foulest crimes of which humanity is capable. Now, and whenever an epidemic of delusion for crime prevails, it is but the voice of Providence calling to the world to pause and look at the sin or the error which lies at the basis of it; to examine its legitimate results, as one after another thev roll their hideous forms into view.

RIDICULE.—It is said that ridicule is the test of truth: it is never applied but when we wish to deceive ourselves—when, if we cannot exclude the light, we are fain to draw a curtain before it. The sneer springs out of the wish to deny; and wretched must be the state of that mind which desires to take refuge in doubt! But the instinct of right and wrong is immutable; all other voices may be silenced, but not that in ourselves.

A BEAUTIFUL ILLUSTRATION.—When you see an old man amiable, mild, equable, content, and good-humored, be sure that in his youth he has been just, generous, and forbearing. In his end he does not lament the past, nor dread the future; he is like the evening of a fine day.

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ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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THE EXCELLENCY OF CHRISTIANITY.

Christianity carries with it proofs of truth and beauty, which belong to no other religion. If there were no saints, martyrs, or miracles to substantiate it, its excellence and applicability to the wants of man are an evidence no logic can overturn. The older and mythological theories, possessed nothing in common with the teachings of Christ. They stripped the hearth to decorate the altar, and starved their worshippers to make orgies for fanciful unknown gods. Fire and sword, blood and rapine, have been their concomitants, and they have made the earth only a sacrificial depot between the eternities. They may have uttered beautiful precepts and proverbs, but they embraced no perfect system by which to model outward and inward life. None of the old religions, in their dances around senseless idols, consulted this world; none of them answered the universal and unalterable laws and voices of nature.

Christianity came with an aptitude to the reason and the affections; it planted itself in the holiest cravings of the human heart. It set itself against profane temples and bloody altars, with messages of peace and good will, and glad tidings of great joy unto all people. It said, let there be no longer a rule of might, but rather a perfect law of love. Love God supremely, and thy neighbor as thyself, was its motto. A co-worker with nature, its first miracle was to relieve human want. Its founder set a perfect example. He asked no tribute, he imposed no tax. "Come, and buy milk and wine, without money and without price," was his proclamation to the world. Humble and meek, he went on his mission, bearing neither scrip nor purse. Plenty followed his footsteps, and blessings were in his hands. To the hungry he gave bread, to the thirsty drink, to the lame strength, to the blind sight, to the dead life, and to all men the word of revelation.

If we view him apart from the Divine; if we cast by the supernatural—still he stands before and above the teachers and philosophers. If we deny him all but manhood, he is still a model for mankind. His maxims we can neither add to nor subtract from. They are of a spirit more beautiful and less selfish than man has conceived. Philosophy, in rejecting the Testament of Christ, has ever stolen and appropriated its spirit.

Simply as the basis of economic society and government, Christianity absorbs every other code and creed in the world. The democracy of Plato, compared with it, is as a dream set against reality. Christianity has its defence—if defence it need—in the fulness and simplicity with which it appeals to and satisfies the humblest and most exalted mind. It rests on propositions accepted by every man's nature and wants. It is the religion for the rich, in that it makes them richer; it is the religion for the poor, in that it makes them rich—rich in faith and hope. It is in agreement with the lessons of the mountains and vallies; the seas, rivers, and skies; the fruits, flowers, and song-voices of the earth; for, like them, it says God is the Father of us all, ever loving and true, and His mercy endureth forever.

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AN ANONYMOUS SLANDER.

Many men's pockets are picked by their wives' extravagance, while their never-ceasing tongues rob them of domestic peace, and their general disagreeableness drives them to the tavern and the gaming-table.—Exchange.

The above-quoted paragraph is traveling the round of the newspapers in an anonymous guise, the author being unknown. And lucky for him it is that he is unknown, else universal execration would be visited upon his head in conjunction with broomsticks and mop-handles. It is a wicked slander, framed for the purpose of excusing the domestic shortcomings of wicked men. The truth is, in a large majority of domestic difficulties the husbands are to blame. After marriage men are too apt to grow indifferent as to whether they please their wives or not—whether they are happy or unhappy—whether home is the wife's paradise or treadmill. When the glow of courtship is upon a young man he would be unwilling to go to a party or to a place of amusement unless his lady-love could accompany him; but, after marriage, too many husbands seek their pleasure abroad while the wife is nursing the children or sitting lonely at home. If husbands behave themselves and always do the loving and proper thing, their wives will emulate their example; but if a man after marriage degenerates into a selfish brute, he must expect to reap the natural and inevitable consequences thereof. We believe in the wives.

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THE ROTHSCHILDS.

As a general thing, highly extravagant ideas are entertained concerning the wealth of this celebrated family. It has been stated that they are worth seven hundred millions of dollars in stocks, bonds, and cash, and three hundred millions in real estate, making a thousand millions in all. The interest of such a sum at six per cent., would be sixty millions of dollars per annum, or nearly one hundred and sixty-five thousand dollars a day. An English paper, however, which gives a minute account of their operations, sets down their entire wealth at forty millions of dollars, which is probably much nearer the mark. This is a great falling off from the popular idea, but even forty millions of dollars is better than nothing.

APPLICABILITIES OF SCIENCE.

Our farmers are just fairly beginning to inquire into and appreciate the benefit of applying science to the cultivation of the soil. They resisted the innovation at first, as resolutely as they did the introduction of labor-saving machines; but interest is stronger even than prejudice, and a few examples set by men who took up agriculture more for experiment than livelihood, has roused the oldest-fashioned farmers to inquiry and imitation. The adaptation of particular soils to particular products, has been consulted from time immemorial, but, without scientific tests, it was never more than a half guess and chance work. The farmer planted corn where he could no longer grow wheat, and, running through the scales of grains, at length found his field capable only of bearing beans. Science has taught him that any and every soil, may be kept in its native strength, and even enriched forever, and that land that *has* once borne wheat, *may* bear it always.

The plodding ploughman, who for centuries turned his furrow and planted his seed in obedience to the phases of the moon, and knew nothing of chemical analysis beyond the application of various manures in greater or less quantities to his fields, has been surprised to find the earth only a great chemical compound, to be studied and worked into service by the strictest rules of science, so that *guessing* as to the quality of soil is no longer necessary. What has not a little science done through improved modes of grafting, towards re-creating the fruit orchards of the country, producing fruits of new and superior qualities? Horticulture exemplifies the advantage of scientific knowledge and application in a still greater degree. With less labor and cost, the scientific farmer is enabled to harvest from the acre double what his "old style" neighbor produces. The latter is soon forced to imitation. By innoculations the scientific farmer produces new forms from old, and raises two, three, and four different crops from his ground, which formerly gave him but one.

The introduction of labor-saving machines created a new era in the history of agriculture, but the application of chemical science was a grander step. This last key unlocks the earth, and lets the farmer into secrets now as simple and beautiful as they were once mysterious and confounding. Without enlarging the boundaries of the farm-field, its products are doubled and trebled by scientific culture, and the country finds itself, by an easy and peaceful revolution, without further tax upon labor, increased in its truest wealth ten, fifty, and often one hundred per cent. The golden age is fast approaching, and its zenith will be indexed by the perfection of the earth's culture. When the farmer becomes as skillful in cultivating his fields as the warrior has been in desolating them, the world will have occasion to rejoice

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GREAT STATESMEN.

We hear much of great statesmen and of many of them, but a really great statesman is a scarce thing. Such men are not every-day developments on the face of party or of society. They do not spring into being at the breath of popular applause. There are plenty of great demagogues; plenty of men who override parties and stand out in impudent, rather than bold relief, like the concentrated evil genius of the bodies on which they thrive; but a man must be more than a successful demagogue, or a popular orator or intriguer, to merit the name, or command the fame, of a great statesman. The politician, at least, lives in his party, and is governed in his action by his party's position and his own ambitions and necessities. The great statesman conceives and creates parties, developes principles for their existence and guidance, and leaves agencies to work for his name and memory long after he is dead. The great statesman catches at deep-seated instincts and convictions in society, and striding in advance of his age, unfolds them into systems of institution and government. He starts with, and goes before, the people, making broad, and light, and firm, a path of principles and practice for them to follow.

Thomas Jefferson was a great statesman—the greatest that modern times, and perhaps all times, have produced. He was great, because he saw as a prophet and appreciated as a patriot. He took hold of the best instincts and noblest passions of the masses, and carrying them up to a full development, moulded them into a system of politics and social ethics, which will not soon be exhausted or outgrown. Such a man, successfully laboring to finitize infinite and divine principles, so as through human institutions and government to make them of the greatest blessing to the common family of man, is a great statesman—aye, a great and god-like man.

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A NEW VIEW OF CRINOLINE.

Certain political economists across the water, announce that the crinoline is a depopulating agent, and that this fact accounts for the remarkable and alarming decrease of the population of France during the last five years. The theory is, that the great expense of ladies' dresses frightens men from marrying. This is, undoubtedly, the case, as any one may understand on taking a broad view of the subject and the ladies' skirts, and computing the cost of a superfine silk dress of modern style. The mode now prevailing is one of such extravagance, that only a princely income can support it and a family both, and, consequently, the ladies have to forego either crinoline or children—and, of course, in many instances, crinoline carries the day. In fact, to such enormous proportions have these things come, that a lady's skirts, with all their addenda of furbelows and flounces, now occupy so much space that there is no room in an ordinary house for cradles and baby-jumpers, not to mention the babies themselves. The fashions must, of course, be maintained; but children, not being in fashion, can be dispensed with; so that, as the dresses expand, the population dwindles; and the love of dress supplants that of a family. We really think it is time a stop were put to this expansion.

◆

TURN ON THE CROTON.

Many families in this city who cherish a due regard for cleanliness and decency complain that a great number of the pupils in attendance at the Public Schools are permitted to indulge in uncleanly habits and wear filthy clothes. This should not be. No matter how poor a family may be, they can afford to be decent. A clean face and clean hands, and a well-combed head, are not expensive luxuries; and clean clothes are not impossible because the garments are coarse or ragged. Every teacher should insist upon his pupils paying strict attention to bodily cleanliness; and if a dirty face or frowzy head comes to school it should be at once dismissed to its rectification and purification. It is an outrage to compel a delicate and tasteful child to sit in the midst of animated masses of filthiness. Turn on the Croton.

◆

FUTURITY.—One of the best gifts of Providence is the veil that conceals futurity.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

IN THE DUMPS.

What does ail me? I'm as blue as indigo. Last night I was as gay as a bob-o'-link—perhaps that is the reason. Good gracious, hear that wind howl! Now low—now high—till it fairly shrieks; it excites me like the pained cry of a human. There's my pretty California flower—blue as a baby's eyes; all shut up—no wonder—I wish my eyes were shut up, too. What *does* ail me? I think it is that dose of a Boston paper I have just been reading (for want of something better to do), whose book critic calls "Jane Eyre" an "*immoral* book." Donkey! It is vain to hope that *his* life has been as pure and self-sacrificing as that of Charlotte Bronte. There's the breakfast-bell—and there's Tom with that autumn-leaf colored vest on, that I so hate. Why don't men wear pretty vests? why can't they leave off those detestable stiff collars, stocks and things, that make them all look like choked chickens, and which hide so many handsomely-turned throats, that a body never sees, unless a body is married, or unless a body happens to see a body's brothers while they are shaving. Talk of women's throats—you ought to see a whiskered throat I saw once—— Gracious, how blue I am! Do you suppose it is the weather? I wish the sun would shine out and try me. See the inch-worms on that tree. That's because it is a pet of mine. Everything I like goes just that way. If I have a nice easy dress that I can sneeze in, it is sure to wear out and leave me to the crucifying alternative of squeezing myself into one that is not broke in to my figure. I hate new gowns—I hate new shoes—I hate new bonnets—I hate anything new except new—spapers, and I was born reading them.

There's a lame boy—now why couldn't that boy have been straight? There's a rooster driving round a harem of hens; what do the foolish things run for? If they didn't run, he couldn't chase them—of course not. Now it is beginning to rain; every drop perforates my heart. I could cry tears enough to float a ship. Why *need* it rain?—patter—patter—skies as dull as lead—trees nestling up to each other in shivering sympathy; and that old cow—I hate cows—they always make a dive at me—I suppose it is because they are females; that old cow stands stock still, looking at that pump-handle just where, and as she did, when I went to bed last night. Do you suppose that a cow's tail ever gets tired lashing flies from her side; do you suppose her jaws ever ache with that eternal munching? If there is any place I like, it is a barn; I mean to go a journey this summer, not to "see Niagara"—but to see a barn. Oh, the visions I've had on hay-mows! oh, the tears I've shed there—oh, the golden sunlight that has streamed down on me through the chinks in the raftered roof—oh, the cheerful swallow-twitterings on the old cross-beams—oh, the cunning brown mice scampering over the floor—oh, the noble bay-horse with his flowing mane, and arching neck, and satin sides, and great *human* eyes. Strong as Achilles—gentle as a woman. Pshaw! women were never half so gentle to me. *He* never repulsed me when I laid my head against his neck for sympathy. *Brute* forsooth! I wish there were more such brutes. Poor Hunter—he's dead, of course, because I loved him;—the *trunk-maker* only knows what has become of his hide, and my books. What of that? a hundred years hence and who'll care? I don't think I love anything—or care for anything to-day. I don't think I shall ever have any feeling again for anybody or anything. Why don't somebody turn that old rusty weather-cock, or play me a triumphant march, or bring me a dew-gemmed daisy?

There's a funeral—a *child's* funeral! Oh—what a wretch I am! Come here—you whom I love,—you who love me; closer—closer—let me twine my arms about you, and God forgive me for shutting my eyes to his sunshine. FANNY FERN.

◆

THE PRESENT HOUR.

Apart from the woes that are dead and gone,
And the shadow of future care,
The heaviest yoke of the present hour
Is easy enough to bear. ALICE CARY.

◆

UNOBTRUSIVE VIRTUES.

One great action is worth a thousand entire ordinary lives; one hero is of more value than a nation of common men.—London Times.

With all our respect for the "Leviathan of the Press," we cannot permit such an absurdly false dictum as the above to pass uncontradicted. The very reverse of what the Times says is the truth, not only in human affairs but throughout all nature. It is the bubbling spring that flows gently, the little rivulet which runs quietly along day and night by the farm-house, that is useful, rather than the swollen flood or the raging cataract. Niagara is well enough as an object of grandeur—as an emblem of the power and greatness of the Creator; but is it at all to be compared for *worth* with the thousands and tens of thousands of crystal fountains and gently flowing rivulets that ceaselessly glide along in their unobtrusive beauty, and water and fertilize the farms and meadows and gardens of the land? So, in our lives, it is not by great deeds, like those of conquerors, that *good* is to be done; it is by the daily and quiet toils and virtues of life—the patient labor, the Christian temper, the loving forbearance of the husband, the wife, the parent, the child, the sister, the brother, the friend, the neighbor, that *good* is to be done and the destiny of the race achieved.

◆

OFFICE-SEEKERS.

Would not any American deem it a dishonor to have it understood that he was fed and clothed by the State; that he was a species of burthen begged or crowded upon a public living; that being too idle or shiftless to subsist himself otherwise, he had been permitted to do chores in the offices of the Government, for which he was to receive at best, no more than the average of men can earn at almost any honest trade? Of course, every American, with a spark of true manliness in his soul, would feel dishonored and indignant at such imputations. Yet, such is the precise position in which a great majority of office beggars voluntarily place themselves. Is it not a brand of shame upon their manhood—are they not the worst paupers in the land?

◆

AMONG the names of the female poets, whose productions have adorned our columns, those of Miss Emma Alice Browne and Miss Sallie M. Bryan have attracted no small share of the attention of our readers. Both are quite young (and we believe they are nearly of the same age), but there is in their poetry not only a beautiful promise but a bright fulfilment. They are natural poets, uttering poetry as roses exhale perfume. They seem to breathe music with as little effort as the wind-harp or sea-shell.

WHAT'LL THEY THINK?

Who cares what they'll think, or what they'll say, concerning ourselves, so long as we have the approval of our own reason and conscience? So long as we wrong no one, assail no just ordinance, social or other, but earnestly and honestly go on our way, about our own business, and to our own taste, why should we care for folly's derision or fashion's frown? What they'll think and what they'll say, are to us as idle scarecrows, dead carcasses of conventionality, which we hold in abhorrence and contempt. We have not shaped our thoughts and acts to so truculent a standard. Let us never shape them to such a standard. No independent soul ever did so demean itself.

And yet, how many waste their lives, and fritter away their man and-womanhood in the everlasting query, "What'll they think?" They can do nothing without recurring to this. They are serfs to the world around them—bond-slaves to the whims and caprices of others. They have no self-rule, no freedom of opinion or deed. "What'll they think?" arranges all their household, fashions their drawing-rooms, their feasts, their equipage, their garments, their amusements, their sociality, their religion, their everything! Poor, hampered souls, for every breath they draw, there is a measure of apprehension. They are unsolved problems of indefinite calculation how to be nose-led. They suffer perpetual suspense. They do nothing without example and pattern.

Society abounds in such. Men are often enough of the lot, but women oftener. If one hoops, all must hoop; if one flounces, all must flounce. No matter whether it is convenient or prudent, they must follow the lead. "What'll they think?" if one dares to stand alone, is their withering fear and torment. It is a sort of social perdition, from which they are ever struggling to escape. Independence with them is out of the question. They have lost all desire to be independent. It's how will the Priggses look at it, that determines them. They must do just as the Priggses do. To the dogs with the Priggses and all their retinue! They are emasculating society, confusing weak men's ideas, and making weak women's minds weaker. Let us have done with the interrogatory, "What'll they think?" Let us cast it out, and bury it with the servile dead past—with the corpses of the bowing, scraping, cringing, and fawning of feudal days and universal slave ages.

◆

BEWARE OF FLIRTATION.

Married men and unmarried women, it seems, can flirt without *legal* danger; but not so bachelors and matrons. A single man who flirts is in danger of either losing his liberty altogether, or of being breach-of-promised into paying dearly for the privilege of keeping it. The Supreme Court has decided, through one of its judges, that when a man has for a long time flirted with a girl—waited upon her in public, visited her in private, given her presents, and done similar amiable things—it is *prima facie* proof of his having promised to marry her. And it has also been decided, in a neighboring State, that when a married woman flirts, (with anybody but her husband,) she furnishes *prima facie* evidence of conjugal infidelity, which, in a trial for divorce, must tell powerfully against her.

This is good. What business has a man to flirt with a girl, perhaps win her affections, occasion her to lose eligible opportunities for marriage, and then sneak off under pretence that he "was only in fun?" Or, what right has a married woman to practice upon infatuated youth those alluring arts peculiar to her sex? Let them beware, hereafter, how they seek amusement in these forbidden paths.

◆

BULWER'S NEW NOVEL.

We are glad to see that our cotemporary, Harper's Weekly, has secured the new novel—"What will he do with it?"—by Bulwer. Bulwer's novels, for some years back, have been successive improvements upon each other, each one being better and more popular than the last. The sale of "the Caxtons" was considerably greater than that of any of Bulwer's former works: "My Novel" was a still greater hit than "the Caxtons;" "What will he do with it?" will no doubt be the masterpiece of the great novelist. It opens admirably.

We say we are glad that our cotemporary has secured this great work, for Harper's Weekly deserves as large a measure of success as the monthly. It is by far the best paper of its kind we ever had in this country, and in respect of reading matter is considerably ahead of the Illustrated London News. We say this without hesitation, for it is not, and we are satisfied never will be, a rival to the Ledger, which has other aims and another field. We can afford most cordially to wish it success.

◆

THE BEST BID.

Some people are afflicted with a mania for buying second-hand articles at auction. They watch the announcement of these sales with eager scrutiny, and are always on hand at an early hour, ready to buy anything from a broken mirror or spoiled carpet down to a dilapidated hand-furnace or split rolling-pin. No matter whether they need an article or not—they are always ready to bid for it. No matter if the purchase of an article will reduce them to melancholy straits, they will bid, and bid, and bid upon it, however high it may be run up. If there is any place of business which unsophisticated people should avoid, it is an auction-room, and when they chance to find themselves in one, the best bid they can make is to bid the auctioneers good-bye as soon as possible.

◆

AN ASTOUNDING SENTIMENT.

Monsieur Thiers, in his "History of the Consulate and the Empire under Napoleon," says, in speaking of Maria Louisa, the Emperor's second wife, "She had received that excellent education which persuaded her that *a woman ought to have no will of her own*, because she cannot tell to whom she is destined; had she been required to go and live in a desert, she would unhesitatingly have complied."

This doctrine will no doubt fill the minds of our free and independent countrywomen with astonishment and their hearts with indignation. *A woman to have no will of her own!* Such a declaration is enough to set the arms of all feminine America a-kimbo.

◆

VERY LUCKY.—The editor of an exchange paper, in giving an account of the murder of a fellow-citizen in his bed for the purpose of robbing his house of a large sum in specie, says, "but luckily the murdered man had deposited all his money in the bank the day before." How very lucky the victim was, truly: he lost nothing but his life!

◆

HOME!—The world is for the working hour; but home is the place of refuge. We come to it when we are weary or weak, our refreshment is there, our rest is there, we reflect there, we recover from sickness there, and when we die in peace, we die there.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—BY GEO D PRENTICE, ESQ, OF THE LOUISVILLE JOURNAL.

THERE are two classes of people, those who forget to read, and those who read to forget. Bookmaking, from being a science, has become a mere manufacture. If the operatives wouldn't starve, they must eat up one another. They have for some time been cutting and carving each other, as if to prepare for the meal. They may have reason for their feast, without finding it a feast of reason.

A PARTISAN candidate in one of the North Western States says that he expects soon to attend the tattered garments of the opposite party to the tomb of oblivion. We suppose he will think himself highly honored, walking in procession to the funeral obsequies of a suit of old clothes.

A NEW ENGLAND writer, speaking of the characteristics of different races of people, says that it has been found that negroes can be better trusted than white men not to betray secrets. We suppose this is upon the principle that they always "*keep dark.*"

A FAST Irishman, in a time of revival, joined the church, but was found sinning grievously not long afterwards. "Didn't you join the Methodists?" inquired a piously-disposed person. "Faix an' I did—I jined for six months, and behaved so well they let me off with three "

A WESTERN judge recently complimented the people of a county very highly because upon his holding court among them not a single indictment was brought before him. It is sincerely to be hoped that the compliment was not due to the grand jury, rather than to the people.

MANY of the European politicians are sneering at our republic simply because it is new. They are a good deal like those epicures who attach no value to a sound cheese, but dote upon it when it becomes corrupt, rotten, and rank with all sorts of offensive abominations

WE have seen it stated that not less than four hundred and fifty Doctors volunteered to serve as common soldiers in the Mexican war. It has been supposed by some that they changed their vocation on account of their scruples against taking human life.

THE book-publishers have sometimes been compared to the old Scandinavian warriors, but the former drink their wine out of the skulls of their friends, the authors whereas the latter quaffed theirs out of the skulls of their enemies.

A WESTERN editor, not noted for brilliancy, says that he "would rather put questions than respond to them" He is perhaps right. He has probably read that fools may ask questions but that it takes wise men to answer them.

MR. THOMAS POTT, a citizen of Western Texas, publishes a violent communication against his neighbors in general because he has had an axe stolen. His rage is evidently a tempest in a *T. Pott.*

A KENTUCKY editor thinks he is to be pitied because he has been "a whole week without mail intelligence" Perhaps some are still more to be pitied for having been all their lives without intelligence of any sort.

THE Washington Union asks whether any party that acts from mere policy can long retain power. Certainly it can if it acts from a wise policy, and most especially if it acts from the best of all policies, honesty.

WE think that a professional fox-hunter is playing a pretty even game when he risks his own head for an animal's tail. It makes precious little difference whether the result be heads or tails.

A SHEFFIELD paper says that the last polish to a piece of cutlery is best given by the hand of a woman. It has been suggested, too, in regard to human cutlery, that the best polish is given to a young blade by woman.

Two men, T. Pepper and P. Pepper, have been hung in Florida for highway robbery. This is a very rough but sometimes, no doubt, a necessary way of stringing peppers.

"SAY *my* horse, if you please," indignantly exclaimed a wife. "My money bought that horse." "Yes, Madam," meekly replied the husband, "your money bought the horse and me too."

A MEMBER of Congress, about to make his first speech, expressed much apprehension that his hearers would think him hardly sufficient calibre for the subject Poh, said a friend, they will be sure to find you *bore* enough.

WE are not sure that men are likely to rise high, simply because they are of high origin. The lark, whose nest is on the ground, soars as near to Heaven as the eagle, and makes much more glorious music.

PUBLIC men sometimes seem to have a mortal antipathy to the promotion of merit, for the reason, perhaps, that merit never promoted them. It is a quality to which they do not feel at all beholden.

BODY and mind are harnessed together for the journey of life. They will get along badly if the coachman, judgment, drives one faster than the other.

IT is said that sailors who have followed the sea for years, are supposed to be able to tell when they are in the neighborhood of Long Island—by the Sound.

THE main difference between a buffoon and a wag is, that the one is a professional fool and the other an amateur fool.

BLUSHING is a suffusion that is generally the least seen in those who have the most occasion for it.

◆

CURRENT ITEMS.

A YOUNG man named Theodore Ganz, living in Rochester, N. Y, being repulsed a short time ago by his lady-love, deliberately laid his head upon the railroad track and permitted a train to run over it. The young lady by whom he had been rejected, on hearing of his horrible fate, gave way to grievous self-reproach, grew ill—then insane, and in a few days died.

AT Chinguacousy, Canada West, a farmer named John Arnot, who was recently grubbing out stumps on his farm, went underneath one that had been pried over and chained down, for the purpose of removing the clay which adhered to it, and the chain slipping from the stump, it sprang back upon the unfortunate man and instantly crushed him.

THE mackerel fishers of Provincetown were quite astonished several mornings since by a strange commotion in their nets, and on hauling them in a huge shark, thirty feet long, was found to be rolled up in one of them. The monster was hauled ashore and killed. His liver weighed a ton and a half, filled twelve barrels, and will yield eight barrels of oil.

THE correspondent of a morning paper, writing from Kansas, says that some building lots, 50 by 125 feet, in Leavenworth, in that Territory, are held as high as $10,000 a piece. Such an insanity of speculation cannot fail to result disastrously to the community in which it is encouraged.

A GEORGIA paper says that a man named Merringues, in a fit of intoxication, attempted to kill his eldest son—a fine young man, twenty-two years old—because he would not permit him to abuse his mother; but that, in the struggle, he was himself slain by the accidental discharge of a revolver which the young man wrested from his hand.

A LITTLE boy aged five and a girl two and a half years, the children of a poor woman named O'Hara, living in Roxbury, Mass., having been locked in a room while their mother went out, set their clothes on fire with matches, and were burned so horribly that both of them died in a few hours.

A MAN named James Bell, residing in Ocean county, N. J., cut his throat from ear to ear, on the fifth day of June last. It is said that he dreamt ten years ago that he should die on that day, and has been in the habit of prophesying ever since that he would certainly not survive that date.

IN South Western Kansas, a party of emigrants were set upon by Indians, a few weeks since, and one man and two children were killed; but the deadly rifles of the whites soon drove off the Indians, who left six of their number dead in the forest.

A FEW days since a hen that had been buried thirty-one days in a haymow in Reading, Vt., was taken from her "living tomb," alive, but too weak to stand. She was carefully nursed and was quite well in a day or two. She lost six pounds in weight during her confinement.

NOT long since, a boy named Frank Noe, living in New Orleans, was severely punished for a trifling offence, after which he procured a rope, went to the stable, and hung himself.

IN Acton, Me., there is now living a soldier of the Revolution, named Ralph Farnham, who fought at the battle of Bunker Hill, and is one hundred and one years old.

A WOMAN in Sixtieth street, in this city, was attacked and severely bitten by a mad dog a few days since. This is the sixth victim this season.

MISS SARAH J. COLBURNE, of Connecticut, died a short time since from the bite of a common black spider.

IN Patterson, N. J., two little girls were recently arrested for stealing flowers from a grave!

REMEMBERED BLISS.

BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

Alas! alas! I did not think,
Amid past hours of deep delight,
That aught could break the golden link
That then between us seemed so bright.
We little dream what time may bring
The heart is a mysterious thing;
A change came o'er thy gentle brow,
And we are but as strangers now.

Yet sometimes in my sadder moods,
Amid the scenes of toil and strife,
And oft in woodland solitudes,
Afar from dark and busy life,
Thy image rises to my eye
As bright as in the days gone by;
Thy voice, low, musical, and clear,
Steals like a spirit's on my ear;
The vanished joys come wildly back
Along life's dark and arid track;
Old thoughts within my bosom stir,
And I am still thy worshipper.

The bird that o'er my pathway flies,
The fleeting vision of a dream,
The star that lights awhile the skies,
Then turns away its silver beam—
These, these are emblems to my heart
Of what thou wast, of what thou art.
The bird, the dream, the star are flown,
And I am left alone—alone;
Yet still I hear with sweet delight
The song the bird sang in her flight;
The dream with all its fairy train
Still haunts the chambers of my brain;
And often when I gaze afar
Through tears where beamed the vanished star,
It seems again to burn on high,
The glory of my clouded sky,
And on its lovely disk I trace
The pictured image of thy face,
And kneel in worship as when first
Its Eden-light upon me burst.

THE ISLAND PRINCESS.

A ROMANCE OF THE OLD AND NEW WORLD.

BY EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

Author of "The Lost Heiress," "The Deserted Wife," "The Missing Bride," "Retribution," etc.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1857, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

[For the benefit of our *new* readers who have not read the preceding chapters of this fascinating story, we will state, in order that they may understand it, that the heroine, Estelle Morelle, who was betrothed to Lord Montressor, on the morning of her marriage day, had confided to his lordship the fact that, when a girl of fifteen, at school in Paris, she had been entrapped into a secret marriage with Victoire L'Orient, the son of her preceptress, who shamefully ill-treated and robbed her; that this miscreant was afterwards transported to Algeria for a crime, while she was ill and delirious of a raging fever, on recovering from which she was informed of the fate of her husband, and also that she had given birth to a female child which had died, during her delirium. All this she had kept a secret from her parents, whose displeasure she feared. Ten years subsequent, she read in the London Times that a French ship, *Le Duc d'Anjou*, had been wrecked, and that among the lost passengers was Victoire L'Orient, who had served out his sentence and was returning home. To her great joy, Lord Montressor spoke no word of reproof for all this, but deeply sympathized with her in everything. They were married in great state and splendor, but as Lord Montressor lead his bride from the church to his carriage, she was arrested on the charge of *bigamy*, at the instance of Victoire L'Orient, whom she supposed dead, but who, to her unspeakable terror and agony, now appeared with his scheming old mother before her, fired with diabolical and implacable revenge. An awful scene follows. Estelle's father, Sir Parke Morelle, a haughty and heartless baron, then for the first time learning of his daughter's youthful folly, casts her off forever, and compels his wife to do the same. All her rich and titled friends desert her. But her noble husband, who loves her with inexpressible tenderness and devotion, stands by her, and his friends, with the officiating bishop and clergymen, do the same. Estelle, or Lady Montressor as she is now called, is taken before a magistrate and committed for trial, the Rev. Messrs. Oldfield and Trevor acting as her bail. The trial comes off, and she is acquitted; but believing herself *morally* (if not *legally*) the wife of Victoire L'Orient, she resolves to flee from Lord Montressor whom she loves more dearly than her own life. Mr. Oldfield tries to persude her to a different course; but at the dead of night, only accompanied by her faithful maid Susan Copsewood, she flees to London, and thence to America. Lord Montressor learns from Estelle's London banker that she had her drafts drawn on a Baltimore banking house, and judges that she therefore sailed for that city. He at once makes preparations to follow, and soon embarks, on board the Queen Charlotte. Several days after, they are passed by the ship Mercury, bound for Baltimore, *and on whose deck Lord Montressor beholds Victoire L'Orient!* Arrived in Chesapeake Bay, an awful storm arises; the Mercury is wrecked: Lord Montressor thinks he sees Victoire L'Orient sink never to rise again; but one passenger of the Mercury still clings to a floating spar, and him his lordship gallantly rescues at the hazard of his own life. On recovering his strength somewhat, the rescued stranger begins to tell Lord Montressor the story of the wreck; but just as he comes to the account of the death of Madame L'Orient (Victoire's mother), he is overcome by his emotion, and stops. This is the situation of affairs at the commencement of the following chapter.—ED. LEDGER.]

CHAPTER X.

RECOGNITION OF THE DEAD BODY.

"And Lara sleeps not where his fathers sleep
But where he died his grave is quite as deep!
Nor is his mortal slumber less profound,
That earth nor formed, nor marble decked the mound."
BYRON.

Deeply shocked as he was, Lord Montressor bent earnestly forward to listen for something farther.

But Mr. Levering, apparently overcome with the thought of the scenes through which he had just passed, covered his face with his hands and continued silent.

The doubt that troubled Lord Montressor remained unsolved. For all that he could gather from Mr. Levering's conversation, Victoire L'Orient might have been lost in the ship, or saved in the boat—supposing that the latter had lived to reach the shore. That his mother had preferred to stay in the ship, where she finally perished, was no sure sign that Victoire had not deserted her there, as he surely might have done had she persisted in remaining while he chose to depart.

Finally, unwilling to disturb Mr. Levering with questions upon this painful subject, conscious also perhaps of feeling too deep an interest in the fate of Monsieur L'Orient, Lord Montressor bade his new acquaintance good day, and, leaving him to repose, went up on deck.

The storm had spent its fury. The wind and waves, as if they had accomplished the object for which they arose, had now subsided.

The scene on deck was a stirring one. The captain, mate and crew were all busily engaged. One party, under the direction of the captain, were preparing to get under sail. Another set, at the orders of the mate, were letting down the boats.

The captain stood forward, levelling his glass at the sand bank that, strewn with seaweed, shells and fragments of the wreck, now loomed largely from the retiring waves.

Lord Montressor came up to the side of the skipper, who immediately lowered his glass and said—

"We are making ready to get under sail, my lord! But first I shall send the boats to the sand bank to bring off that body, which has been cast ashore there, and give it Christian burial, at least, if it be only in the depths of the sea! By the general appearance, I think it is the body of that man that beat the other one off the plank and drowned himself in the act. There! you can see for yourself, my lord." And the captain placed the glass in the hands of his passenger.

Lord Montressor raised the instrument and took sight at the sand bank.

Yes! there, thrown up by the waves, partially buried in the sand, and slightly covered with seaweed, lay the dead body of a man! Various fragments of the wrecked ship, and remnants of its cargo—spars, yards, planks, barrels, casks and strong boxes, more or less broken and staved open, were scattered about. From these various objects Lord Montressor turned his glass once more upon the dead body. It certainly did bear some resemblance to the man who had struck his companion from the plank, and perished in the deed; but beyond this Lord Montressor could not form any conclusive opinion in regard to it. With a sigh he dropt the telescope.

Two boats were now lowered, manned, and pushed off from the brig.

Lord Montressor watched their course with his naked eye until they reached the scene of the wreck; then he once more raised the telescope to scan more closely their operations on the sand bar.

The men in the small boat landed first, and reverently raised the corpse, and carried it on board their boat, where they covered it with a sail cloth; then they returned to the sands and joined the men from the large boat, who went about among the waifs of the wreck, selecting such casks, barrels and boxes as had received the least injury, and were the most worthy of preservation. When this was done and the second boat was laden, the men embarked again and rowed back to the Queen Charlotte.

The large boat with the rescued relics of the wreck reached the brig first, and was unladen before the small boat, propelled slowly with measured strokes, in honor of the dead she bore, arrived.

THE "KING OF THE ISLAND'S" RECEPTION OF MADAME L'ORIENT AND "THE PRINCESS."

She pulled up to the starboard gangway, where the captain, mate and many of the passengers were assembled to receive her.

The corpse, still wrapped in the sail cloth, was reverently lifted out, hoisted up and laid upon the deck.

The face and breast were uncovered and exposed to inspection.

"Is there any one present who is able to identify this body?" inquired the captain, possibly as a mere matter of form, for it was not probable that any other than the shipwrecked passenger, then resting in the cabin, could be competent to do so.

Many, however, crowded around to examine the features of the corpse. It seemed that of a man of about thirty years of age, of tall, slight figure, brown complexion, black hair, eyebrows and moustacheos, and features that seemed to have originally been regular and handsome as far as their present distorted and stiffened condition allowed the spectator to judge.

Lord Montressor stood among the lookers-on, and, with folded arms and serious brow, gazed upon the face of the dead. And well he might! It was the cause of all his woe—it was the mortal foe of Estelle—it was, in a word, Victoire L'Orient that lay dead before him!

No one spoke.

"Well?" asked the captain, looking around upon the earnest faces bent over the body.

"I can identify this corpse, Captain Brande," said the solemn voice of Lord Montressor.

All eyes were now turned upon his lordship

"Well, my lord?" said the captain.

"This is the body of a Frenchman, by name Victoire L'Orient, a native of Paris, and a late passenger on board the Mercury. It would be well, also, to have this identity farther proved by Mr. Levering, the rescued passenger below."

And Lord Montressor, having delivered these words, bowed gravely and withdrew from the scene.

The corpse was again wrapped in the canvass and carried aft, to the stern gallery, where it was laid and covered over, while preparations were made for the burial.

Julius Levering, after an hour's repose, dressed himself in a suit of clothes supplied to him by Lord Montressor's valet, and came up on deck to look about; hearing that a dead body had been picked up and recognized as that of Victoire L'Orient, he inquired where it lay; and being informed, he went aft to the stern gallery to behold it. Arrived upon the spot, he stooped, raised the covering, and gazed upon the face of the dead.

He had a heavy stake in the fate of this man, beside whose corse he stood wrapped in the closest thought. He started like a detected criminal in hearing a voice speak at his side—

"I beg your parding, Capting, but do you also know this corp?" said a man in livery, touching his hat as he joined him.

"Yes, my friend, this is the body of Monsieur Victoire L'Orient, my late fellow-passenger," replied Mr. Levering, recovering his self-possession.

"Beg your parding again, Capting, but are you certain now as this is really and truly the body of Mounseer Wictwor?" repeated the new-comer, incredulously.

"Of course I am, friend," replied Mr. Levering, gravely.

"Can't possibly be *anybody else* by mistake, can it?"

"Assuredly not."

"Then he is Mounseer Wictwor to a *dead certainty*?"

"To a dead certainty, yes," answered Mr. Levering, wondering at the strange manner of the intruder.

"And was he *drownded* sure enough?"

"Certainly, he was."

"And are you sure he is *quite* dead?"

"Can you not see for yourself?" asked Mr. Levering, beginning to believe his new acquaintance to be a lunatic.

"Yes—he looks so, sartain! but then you never can depend on these wenomous reptyles! They're so uncommon deceiving."

"Deceiving?"

"Yes! you never can be sure on 'em unless you bile 'em!"

"I don't understand you."

"I mean they're so werry apt to come round again!—do you think *he'll* come around?"

"What?"

"Do you think he'll not *come to life* presently?"

"Does he look like it?" inquired Mr. Levering now firmly convinced that his interlocutor was a madman.

"No, he don't! but as I said afore, you can't place any confidence in sich!"

"Why, what do you mean?"

"Nothing! only this here Mounseer was shipwracked *once afore* and drownded—*dead*. And two years arfter, when everybody had forgotten him, lo! and behold! he comes to life and turns up most onconveniently, in the wrong time and place, as sprightly as a sarpint in spring! and gives no end to the trouble to those in high places!"

"Pray, friend, who are *you*?" inquired Mr. Levering of the supposed maniac.

"One of his lordship, Lord Montressor's grooms."

"Oh!" exclaimed Mr. Levering, with the air of a man upon whom a sudden light had broken.

The men coming aft to prepare the dead body for burial, interrupted the conversation. The new acquaintances both left the stern gallery. The groom went down to the gun-deck to gossip with the sailors. And Mr. Levering proceeded to inspect the waifs of the wreck that had been brought on board. He seemed very much relieved to find among them a strong box which he immediately claimed and proved to be his own.

At noon that day the solemn ceremony of a "Burial at Sea" was performed. The crew were all piped on deck, and amid a reverential silence, the captain read the impressive funeral service of the Episcopal Church. And at its conclusion the body was solemnly committed to the deep.

And immediately afterwards the Queen Charlotte once more set sail. And from this hour an uninterrupted season of fine weather, with a fresh wind, favored her until the fifth day, a beautiful Sabbath near the last of August, when at sunrise the Queen Charlotte, with all her flags flying, anchored in Baltimore harbor.

The same morning Lord Montressor bade adieu to his late companions, and left the ship for his hotel.

If any circumstance would have augmented his intense desire to meet Estelle, it must have been his possession of the important information he had now to communicate to her. He considered the events of the recovery of the drowned body by the crew of the Queen Charlotte, and his own presence on the spot to identify the corpse as that of Victoire L'Orient, as Providential. He felt assured that certainty in regard to the fate of this man must at least give peace to the tempest-tost life of Estelle. He hoped also that it would change her purposes and settle her future. And now that he had reached port, his anxiety to find her was almost insupportable. But the Sabbath must be lived through; nay, indeed notwithstanding his weak human impatience, it must be duly honored! He compelled himself to be quiet, and went to the Episcopal church twice that day—attending St. George's in the forenoon, and St. John's in the afternoon, in the faint, vain hope also that at one or the other he might possibly see Estelle, whom he knew to be a scrupulous and regular attendant upon Divine Service.

And then, after a night of sleepless anxiety, he arose early on Monday morning, and as soon as there was any possibility of finding the bankers at their place of business, he took a carriage and drove it to the banking-house of Somerville and Son. He found the senior partner already at his desk. He introduced himself, and made inquiries relative to the lady of whom he came in search.

Alas! Alas!

At first Mr. Somerville, senior, knew nothing about such a lady—had never seen or heard of her, and was certain, begging his lordship's pardon, that she had never honored their establishment with a call. But at this point of the conversation, Mr. Somervile, junior, who had been standing at another desk, listening with his pen behind his ear came forward, and recalled to his father's mind the beautiful English lady, dressed in deep mourning, who had come from the house of Scofield Brothers, London, and had called upon them just two weeks ago.

Then—yes! oh, yes! the old banker did not remember the lovely lady in mourning, but he remembered the heavy drafts drawn by Scofield Brothers on them, in favor of —— now, who *was* it in favor of? He referred to his papers and found—

"Estelle Montressor."

"Yes, that was the lady."

Well! the lady had received her money and had departed. And that was all they knew of her. And from them Lord Montressor received no other satisfaction.

CHAPTER XI.

HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF THE ISLES.

"A merry madman this!" PROUT.
——"Though this be madness, yet
There's method in't!" SHAKESPERE.

While Lord Montressor pursues his search for Estelle, we must take up the fortunes of some other persons who are concerned in our narrative. But first a brief review of Victoire L'Orient's course seems necessary to the reader's better understanding of what follows:—

'Tis hard for human actions to account,
Whether from reason, or from impulse only,"

writes the lamented Thomas Hood.

It would certainly be difficult to explain satisfactorily the motives of the course of conduct pursued by Victoire L'Orient towards the hapless lady whose evil fortune had placed her peace, if not her destiny, in his power. One would have naturally supposed that, being released from his penal life, he would have proceeded directly to England, and, while her hand was yet free, would have openly demanded possession of the woman whom he claimed as his wife. Why he did not do so—why, on the contrary, he chose to wait for the hour when she should bestow her hand on another, to humble her before the whole world, is the unresolved problem. Of course every theory of his motives must be purely speculative.

Judging, however, from what we have already seen of his character and have heard of his history, it is neither unreasonable nor uncharitable, to suppose the following to have been the case:

A man like Victoire L'Orient, of depressed moral and intellectual nature, usually feels a strong antagonism to a woman who is brought into constant and rebuking comparison with himself, especially when that woman is his own wife, whom he deems should of right be in all respects his inferior and subordinate. Very soon must Monsieur Victoire have discovered the moral and intellectual excellence of the young creature whom he had ensnared, and consequently the wide disparity of character between himself and her. This alone was sufficient to have galled a spirit so egotistical as his own. And when we remember that in addition to this, Estelle inevitably detected his utter unworthiness, and that, notwithstanding her sweet patience and forbearance, she must unavoidably, through the very truthfulness and ingenuousness of her character, have revealed the low estimation in which she held him, we need not feel any degree of surprise that his selfish passion for her was largely alloyed with hate, and that his desire to possess, was quite equalled by his wish to humble her.

With these feelings and purposes, having been pardoned, or having served out his time in Algiers, he embarked in the "Duc D'Anjou" for France. Picked up by an Algerine corsair from the wreck of that vessel, he had been re-conveyed to the Barbary States. Escaping thence, he once more returned to Europe.

He came to England to claim the hand of Estelle, or, failing to obtain it, to extort money from her parents as the price of silence and absence.

But on arriving at Exeter, and hearing of her approaching nuptials with the Viscount Montressor, and being ignorant of the good and sufficient reasons she possessed for supposing himself to be deceased, all the most malignant passions of his heart were enkindled, and all the most cunning faculties of his mind were employed to enable him to meet the exigency in a manner that should at the same time punish Estelle and profit himself.

Feeling no doubt of the legality of that rite by which he supposed he had secured her person and fortune, yet fearing, nevertheless, that in the event of his *then* claiming her hand, her father would interfere, and, by means of his vast wealth and influence, contrive to invalidate, or in some other manner break the bond that united them, he, with a demon's art, resolved to reserve himself, to conceal the fact of his existence for awhile, to allow her—unconscious of his presence in the country—to go to the altar, and then, armed with a warrant for her arrest, spring a trap upon her.

Not that he intended she should suffer the extreme penalty of the law; but that he wished to degrade her in the eyes of the whole world, so that even her haughty parents should be willing, as their only resort, to resign her, with her fortune, to his possession. To accomplish this end, it had been his purpose, after the interruption of the nuptials by the arrest of the bride, to have had an explanation, and come to a compromise with Estelle's family, and in the event of their closing with his terms, to have withdrawn his witnesses, so that at the trial before the Judge of the Assizes, there should be no evidence against her, who, being then free, though ruined, would fall to his undisputed possession.

Fortunately for Estelle, her advocate, Lord Dazzleright, at once detected the policy of the prosecuting party. And the manner in which the charge was met and the defence conducted at the preliminary investigation, disabused Monsieur Victoire of the false hope of obtaining possession of Estelle, and at the same time aroused all the vindictive passions of his nature, that instigated him to have her prosecuted to the utmost extent of the law.

Upon the occasion of the trial before the Assizes, the charge of the Judge to the jury—in which his lordship distinctly declined to pronounce upon the validity of the alleged first marriage, declaring that to be a matter for the adjudication of the spiritual courts—had again, however irrationally, revived his hopes.

At the conclusion of the trial, he determined to keep trace of Estelle, and to file a petition to be heard upon his claim, before the Court of Arches.

He soon discovered the flight of Estelle to London, and subsequently her embarkation for Baltimore.

In pursuit of her he took passage on the Mercury bound for the same port.

But Monsieur Victoire had still another motive, (which shall be revealed,) for his voyage to America.

The most debased and unfortunate of wretches possibly have some friends whom they love, or by whom they are beloved. And this miserable Victoire had his mother, who doted on him, and a fellow-voyager upon whom he doted. The name of the last mentioned was Julius Luxmore. How he had first become acquainted with this young man it is not necessary now to relate. It is sufficient to say that he had known him intimately for about two years.

From the moment of Victoire L'Orient's embarkation on board the Mercury, his spirits had suffered a reaction into gloom and apathy, to which those of his volatile nation are frequently subject. And this despondency increased with every league of the voyage, until, when half across the Atlantic ocean, it amounted to absolute despair. He passed much of the day in leaning over the bulwarks of the vessel, gazing gloomily into the sea, and sometimes muttering to himself,—

"I shall never see Etoile! I shall never see Etoile!"

One afternoon he was thus standing in the stern of the vessel with his elbow resting on the taffrail, his chin leaning upon his hand, and his eyes fixed intently upon the foaming sea in the wake of the vessel, when his friend came up to his side, touched his elbow, and said, cheerily,—

"Come, come, shipmate! Do you think we are near a sunken reef? And are you making leaden plummets of your eyeballs to take the soundings? What are you gazing at?"

"*Mon trombeau*,"[*] answered the Frenchman, gloomily.

"'These things must not be thought on after these ways! so, it will make us mad,' as the tender-hearted Lady Macbeth says."

"*Mais mon Dieu!* I shall never see Etoile! I shall never see Etoile!"

"'Consider it not so deeply!' I think you have everything to hope! You must not judge her inclinations by the action of her counsel! Reflect! she has fled from Lord Montressor, not from you!"

"Grand Heaven! who talks of her! It is not of Estelle, my demon of a wife, that I speak!" exclaimed Victoire, shrugging his shoulders.

"Of whom then? Etoile—Etoile—I never heard the name! Has Monsieur Victoire perhaps *consoled* himself for the absence of Madame Estelle?" inquired Luxmore, in a tone of raillery.

"Ah! no, no," replied the Frenchman, in the same mournful tone—"I speak of my child—my daughter—my pretty little Etoile!"

"Your child!" exclaimed Luxmore in astonishment.

"Yes, my friend! Mon Dieu. Yes, my daughter! my dear Etoile!"

"But you never told me you had a child?"

"But yes, mon Dieu! I have! I did from all the fact conceal! Listen, you! You shall hear! That woman of perdition, Estelle had a child—a daughter."

"Is it possible! And that child lives!"

"Yes! yes! my beautiful Etoile! My Princess of the Isle! My star of the sea!" exclaimed the Frenchman, with real or feigned enthusiasm.

"You astonish me! And her mother——?"

"Does not know she lives! Attend you! I will, from you, nothing hide. She has an uncle—the King of the Isle!"

"Eh? What?" exclaimed the other in perplexity.

"I have an uncle—the King of the Isle."

"My poor Victoire, has grief unsettled your reason?"

"Why?"

"Just now you spoke of your daughter, as Princess of the Isle, but as you also called her a star of the sea, I considered both phrases figurative! Now, however, when you talk gravely of your uncle, who is the king of the Island——"

"But grand Dieu! my dear and good friend, you comprehend not! I have one uncle who is a bachelor—old and rich, and resident for a long time upon an Island in the sea! But mon Dieu! he is foolish, imbecile, idiotic," said Victoire, in a tone of real or assumed grief.

"I am sorry, since it distresses you; but I cannot see what your mad uncle has to do with the life of your daughter or the ignorance of her mother."

"But, my faith! it has a great deal to do with both the one and the other! Attend you! I shall nothing conceal! Regard you! you shall know all! Listen you, then, my dear friend!"

And Monsieur Victoire L'Orient commenced an explanation which I beg leave to disembarrass from his idiomatic French and broken English and give in less unintelligible language.

It seems from the representations of Monsieur Victoire that the family "L'Orient" really once belonged to the ancient seignuerie of Provence. The younger and of course poorer branch of that family, were of the company of French Roman Catholics who went out with Lord Baltimore's emigrant troupe, and settled the province of Maryland.

This particular family fixed upon one of the loveliest and loneliest of the Islands of the Chesapeake, and from that day through several successive generations held it in their exclusive possession. Indeed, their greatest desire, their hereditary passion, seemed to be to keep this beloved and beauteous Island in the family.

In all these years the intercourse between the European and the American branches of the old house was not suffered to wane. On the contrary, several successive intermarriages had revived and consolidated the relationship. Thus when an heir of the Island reached man's estate his choice of a bride was limited by the number of his marriageable female cousins in France. Or if a daughter happened to be the sole heiress, a husband was found for her among the males of the same.

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[*] My grave.

The American branch of the house, were called for distinction L'Oriens *de l'Ile* (or of the Island). But this term in the course of time became a second surname, or a sort of title, so that the owner of the Island was always called Monsieur L'Orient De L'Ile. And any European L'Orient who married a sole heiress of the Island became in her right,also Monsieur L'Orient De L'Ile;—though by his American neighbors of the coast, he was called simply Mr. De L'Ile.

We all know that successive intermarriages are not favorable to any race. Hence it is not surprising that the family of L'Oriens De L'Ile gradually died out. And the last lineal descendant, Monsieur Hubert De L'Ile, who married his first cousin had neither son nor daughter to succeed him.

The European branch of the house that had remained in France, and married into other families, continued, on the contrary to be a handsome and vigorous race.

And of such was the father of Monsieur Victoire.

But Monsieur Victoire had, as he says, an uncle, the elder brother of his father. This man, Monsieur Henri L'Orient, was socially a bachelor and an oddity, and politically a royalist and a Bourbonist. He had one grand passion, and that was for—islands! or perhaps I should say for the family Island in the Chesapeake, to which he was heir presumptive. During the lifetime of Monsieur and Madame Hubert De L'Ile, he made several voyages to the Chesapeake, and spent many months on the Island. His love of the place was immense, his praise of it extravagant, his compliments to the proprietors as sincere as they were overwhelming.

"You are like a king and queen here! you are in your insular domain! Your kingdom is only bounded by the infinite sea!"

Thus he became a great favorite with the childless old people, who would laughingly reply—

"Ah well! if it is so, if we are a king and queen, then you are the prince and the heir of the kingdom."

And at their death they left a will bequeathing the Island to Monsieur Henri L'Orient, and in case the latter should die without children, to Monsieur Victoire L'Orient and his heirs forever.

Monsieur Henri L'Orient was sixty years old when he "came to his kingdom." It was not likely that he would take a wife and become the father of sons and daughters at that age. So he invited his younger brother, with his family, to accompany him to his insular domain. But Madame, his sister-in-law, who was at that time young, pretty, fashionable and extravagant, preferred the saloons of Paris to the loveliest Island in the world. And so Monsieur Hubert took leave of his relatives, and departed alone for his "kingdom."

And years passed during which the old man was too much attached to his Island, and his relatives in Paris too much devoted to pleasure, to permit an exchange of visits.

But fifteen years after the separation, Madame was a widow without youth, beauty or riches. And her good brother-in-law wrote, proposing that she should come and bring her son and take up her residence with him.

But oh, horror! Madame could not think of such a thing! She infinitely preferred to trust to her own resources in Paris, rather than to go out to live among "mulattoes and mud turtles on his Island in the Bay."

And with the help of friends Madame opened her Pensionnat des Demoiselles.

Five more years passed and old Monsieur Henri grew older in the solitude of his insular "kingdom." Now, whether it were the effect of his strange and lonely life, the approach of extreme old age, or the misfortunes of his beloved Bourbons, or all these causes combined, I know not, but the mind of the old man became deranged upon one subject, his grand passion became a monomania, his jest grew earnest, his ownership of the Island appeared the sovereignty of a kingdom, and his letters to his sister-in-law and nephew were signed—with more rigid formality of course than a real monarch would have used—

"HENRI, BY GRACE OF GOD, KING OF THE ISLES."

For as his monomania grew he imagined that his sovereign sway extended over all the Islands of the Bay. At first as his letters betrayed no other sign of the writer's mental alienation, his sister-in-law deemed this signature an odd piece of pleasantry, as indeed in the first instance it might have been; but when letter after letter came, gravely signed in this manner, and when, in addition, he expressed his great anxiety to see her son, the "Prince," his nephew—Madame's eyes were opened!

"This unfortunate old beast is mad!" she said —"we must look after him!"

"But just as Madame came to this conclusion her own especial family affairs demanded her exclusive attention. Her son Monsieur Victoire was on trial for treason; Victoire's baby-bride had a baby of her own that must be concealed; her "pensionnat" was broken up; her character was impeached; and finally the necessity of a change of residence was for all these reasons imperative. She only waited the result of Victoire's trial, and when he was condemned to Algiers, she gathered together the remnants of her property, turned the whole into cash, took her stolen grand child, whom she chose, for private reasons of her own, to represent, for the present, to its mother, as dead,—and went down to Dijon. Thence she wrote to her brother-in-law, "His Majesty the King of the Isles," that her son, the "Prince," his nephew had experienced unheard of misfortunes, through his devotion to his allies, the Bourbons; and that he was now banished to Algeria. But that his "Highness" had left a child, an infant daughter, an angel of beauty; and—what should she do with this child?

The course of months brought back the old man's answer. The "King of the Isles" expressed the most exalted admiration of his nephew the Prince's heroism, and the most profound sorrow for his misfortunes; and ended by entreating his unhappy sister-in-law to bring the "Princess," her grand-daughter, to be educated at his own court.

"Great Heaven! that old animal is very mad! I hope he is not dangerous! Very well! if he should be, his negro slaves are strong enough to bind him at my command. And who will have a better right to command than I, when I get there?" said Madame, who being a prompt as well as a courageous woman, immediately wrote to the "Island King," saying that she should quickly follow her letter, and have the honor of presenting the "Princess" at the court of His Majesty. And so in the course of a few weeks Madame, having in charge the yearling child, embarked on board the "Sirene," bound from Havre to Baltimore, engaging the captain to put her on shore at L'Orient, or East Island.

It was after a prosperous voyage of two months, and upon a most beautiful morning in May, that Madame was early aroused from her berth to get ready to go on shore. Upon occasion she could be quick in making her toilet, so in twenty minutes from the opening of her eyes she stood upon the deck, looking out for the long-talked of, the beloved, the beauteous Island.

There it lay before her, in its more than ideal loveliness! There it lay like an emerald on the bosom of the bay! A beautiful green island, dimpled with hill and valley, veined with limpid streams, studded with grey and mossy rocks, shaded with tall groves, and environed by the blue waters that leaped and sparkled in the morning sun like a living sea of liquid sapphires! There was a vivid and delicate freshness of hue in the luxuriant vegetation of the Isle, as peculiar as it was delightful. Far in the interior, from amidst the green beauty of the grove, arose the many tall, white chimneys of the Island mansion. Scattered about in picturesque groups were the white cottages of the negro servants. Down on the beach was a white boat-house, built in the shape of a Chinese pagoda.

Madame gazed in a sort of enthusiasm upon the scene.

"It is a magnificent place, after all! My faith! those comical De L'Iles did well to adore it! As for me, I shall take that old madman in hand! I shall assume the direction of affairs. I shall introduce a new order of things. I shall form the acquaintance of the gentry on the main land. I shall give *fêtes* and dances! My Heaven! I must amuse myself, or else I shall die of grief for poor Victoire, or go mad like His Majesty, the King of the Isles! And at last Victoire will come back; or at least my little Etoile will grow up; and by the by, it is very fortunate, my faith! that I have this child as a passport to acceptance!" soliloquised Madame.

And she had scarcely had time thus to lay out her future before the long-boat came around to the starboard gangway, and her trunks were lowered into it.

"The boat awaits the pleasure of Madame," said the captain, offering himself to assist her in the descent. Madame was carefully seated, the babe was put in her arms, the six sailors plied their oars, and the boat skimmed like a sea-bird the surface of the sparkling waters.

Ten minutes brought them to the landing place on the Isle—a little pier beside the boat-house, painted white, and ascended by three steps.

From this pier an avenue of half a mile in length, shaded by beautiful trees, led up through fields and pleasure-grounds, towards the house. All this madame saw at a glance, while the boat was pushed up and moored.

But upon the pier stood a most interesting group—namely, "His Majesty the King of the Isles" and the chief ministers of his court—in other words, Monsieur Henri De L'Ile and a half dozen of his negro men.

Madame gazed in a sort of consternation—she had expected to find a very aged, decrepit, drivelling madman. "His Majesty," on tne contrary, though eighty years of age, was still one of the finest looking men she had ever set eyes upon—tall, broad-shouldered and erect in form, with a fresh, handsome, noble countenance, surrounded by a thick growth of hair and beard as white as snow. He wore a purple cashmere morning-gown folded like a royal robe about his person. His manner was dignified and courteous as he stood waiting to receive his guests. The half dozen negro men that were with him were neatly dressed in white trousers and pink shirts, and were remarkable for their healthful and joyous appearance.

"Very good! the madman and his familiars are not so ill to look upon!" said Madame, as with the child in her arms she left the boat.

Monsieur Henri, with the air of the Grand Monarque, came down to meet her.

"Welcome, illustrious lady and beloved sister! welcome to our court, our kingdom, and our heart!" he said, holding out both his hands.

"I thank you, Monsiegneur!" replied Madame. But as she was embarrassed with the babe in her arms she could not accept his offered courtesy.

"Why, how then! is Madame, my sister, left without her retinue? And has the Princess, my neice, no attendance?" exclaimed Monsieur Henri, looking excessively shocked.

"Madame the Duchesse de Berri had no more, when she wandered in La Vendee!" said our Madame, demurely.

"Oh, miserable country!—oh, unfortunate princes!" exclaimed the old man, lifting his hands and raising his eyes to heaven. Then—"give me the illustrious babe," he said; and taking the child in his arms with the solemn air of a bishop, who was about to baptize it, he called to one of his negroes—"Come hither, Monsieur Louis."

A tall, aged man, with a very black skin, and very white hair, who was clothed like the others, in a pink shirt and white trousers, approached and bowed respectfully.

"This is my High Constable of the Kingdom, Madame," said Monsieur De L'Ile, introducing the new comer.

Then placing the infant solemnly in the arms of the old negro, he charged him, saying—

"Receive your Princess, Monsieur Louis! and bear her on before us to the palace! I follow with Madame."

Without suffering a muscle of his very intelligent face to change, the old negro received the babe, and led the way up the shaded avenue towards the house.

"August lady, and dear sister, will you accept my arm?" said Monsieur Henri, bowing and offering his services with the air of Chevalier Bayard.

"I thank you, Monsiegneur," said the 'august lady,' suffering him to draw her arm within his own, and lead her on, up the lovely, shadowy walk, through the shrubberies, the pleasure grounds and the flower gardens. There were so many flowers! especially roses!—'roses, everywhere roses'—they flushed all the green island with their bloom, and filled all the air with their perfume. They clustered thicker as you approached the white house with its many tall chimneys, and its central front portico. They climbed its posts, and ran along its eaves and cornices, and shaded its windows.

"What a beautiful, beautiful place!" said Madame, in rapture.

Monsieur Henri led her up the white stone stairs of the portico, through the front door, and into a broad central hall from which several half-open doors on either side revealed glimpses of many spacious rooms in their summer array of straw matting, white curtains, linen covers and many flowers; while the wide open doors at the back of the hall exposed a pleasant view of gardens, vineyards and orchards, sloping down to the shore.

"Welcome to my court, illustrious Madame," said Monsieur De L'Ile, opening the first door on his right and ushering his guest into a pleasant, airy parlor. He led her to an arm-chair, placed her in it, and then rang for attendance.

The bell was answered by the appearance of a handsome and even very intellectual-looking mulatto woman, of about thirty years of age, who curtseyed and stood waiting.

"This is Mademoiselle Madeleine, the first lady of your bed-chamber, Madame," said Monsieur Henri, presenting the woman to her new mistress.

"And now, Mademoiselle, conduct your august mistress to her apartment.—Monsieur Louis?—Ah! you are there! Deliver the Princess into the charge of Mademoiselle."

The woman took the babe and bowing to Madame, led the way upstairs to a suit of apartments on the right side of the central hall, whose many windows looked out upon the beautiful pleasure grounds of the Island and upon the surrounding sea, and whose summer furniture was arranged with the nicest regard to comfort and elegance.

"My faith! the lunatic knows how to keep house!" thought the lady. Then turning to her attendant, she inquired—

"Does your master ever become violent?"

"Madame?"

"I ask you does your master ever become ungovernable—dangerous?"

"Pardon! I do not understand Madame," said the woman, gravely and respectfully.

"You *will* not I suspect," muttered the lady, then aloud she asked—

"How long has your master been mad?"

"Pardon! Madame has been misinformed; my master is not mad."

"Your master is not mad!" exclaimed the lady, in astonishment.

"No, Madame," replied the mulatto, calmly.

"You tell me that your master, Monsieur Henri De L'Ile, is not mad?"

"Yes, Madame."

"Then, if he is not mad, I should not wonder if you told me next that he is King of the Isles!"

"Certainly, Madame, he is King of the Isles."

"How? Your master, Monsieur De L'Ile, King of the Isles?"

"Assuredly, Madame, since he says it."

"Oh! then since this is so, I see how it is! I have arrived at Bedlam, and we are all lunatics together!" exclaimed the visitor, highly provoked.

"Has Madame any orders?" inquired the woman, humbly.

"Yes! lay that child on the bed, and go and send Louis to me."

"Yes, Madame." And the woman left the room to do her errand.

In a few moments Louis appeared at the chamber door, bowed and stood waiting.

"Louis! how long has your master been mad?" inquired the lady, peremptorily.

"Forgive! but Madame has been deceived! my master is not mad."

"Then I suppose that he is really King of the Isles?" questioned the guest, ironically.

"Undoubtedly, Madame, since he says."

"And he is not mad?"

"Assuredly not, Madame."

"Then I am! that is all."

"Has Madame any orders?"

"No!—Yes!—tell Madeleine to return to me."

The old man bowed deeply and retired.

Madame clasped her temples with both hands.

"Yes!" she said. "It is I, without doubt, who am mad, or shall soon become so! Here I arrive at the extremity of the civilized world—the very jumping off place, and what do I find? a courtly madman, who calls himself King of the Isles, and a pair of mulatto savages, who address me in the elegantly turned phrases of the Tuileries, and confirm his title——Ah! in a good hour! here comes Mademoiselle, my maid of honor!"

The entrance of the mulatto put an end to Madame's soliloquy, and suggested the propriety of arranging her toilet. With the assistance of Madeleine, her black satin dressing gown was arranged, her well dyed black ringlets smoothed, the white lace collar and mits put on, and Madame was ready to go down to breakfast.

Madeleine remained to take care of the child.

Louis stood outside the door, bowed and preceded the lady to show her the way to the breakfast parlor.

It was a delightful room on the right hand of the hall, with its floor covered with straw matting. Its many muslin-draped windows were open to a view of rolling green meadows, covered with tender spring vegetation, and variegated with apple, peach and cherry trees, all in full bloom. And beyond the wide expanse of sparkling, leaping blue water stretched away until its boundaries were lost under the purple, crimson, and gold of the morning horizon.

The breakfast table, covered with fine white damask, and adorned with a service of silver and white sevres, was laden with all the luxuries of the season.

Monsieur De L'Ile, (unless the reader prefers that I should call him the King of the Isles,) stood ready to hand Madame to the table—an act of gallantry that he performed with the stately courtesy of a Guise or a Medici.

Louis took his stand at a sideboard that stood between two of the open windows, and from whence he served coffee, tea or chocolate.

Madame had enough to do to watch her host. She engaged him in conversation, hoping to be able to measure the extent of his insanity, and to find out whether, and how best, she could wrest from his aged hands the control of his own property—first whether she could not do it without having *recourse* to law,—secondly whether she could do it even *through* law. Of the first there was little hope—the old man's mind upon every subject but the one, acted with a vigor, clearness and directness that proved him to be a very unlikely subject for even the most artful woman's government; of the second there was no certainty, for though upon one idea he was undoubtedly mad, yet upon the first suspicion of her purpose to subject him to a medical, or a judicial examination, he would assuredly have the cunning to conceal his madness;—a measure in which he would be supported by his two educated slaves Louis and Madeleine, who, for whatever reason, were certainly flatterers of his mania.

However, Madame was not a woman rashly to resign a purpose, or grow hopeless of its accomplishment.

And all this time while her head was busily brewing plots, the old man, the purposed victim of her machinations was loading her with compliments and attentions.

When breakfast was over Madame set herself to arrange her own personal attendance. Madeleine was retained as her maid. And a pretty mulatto girl named Coralie, the younger sister of Madeleine, was appointed nurse to the "Princess Etoile." Frivole, the boy brother of those girls was brought from the garden into the house as page and messenger. And Madame's establishment was complete.

The next day was the Sabbath. Madame was a devout Roman Catholic, and a scrupulous attendant upon mass. Here was a difficulty not thought of before. Where and how should she attend mass? She early rang her bell.

Her maid answered the summons.

"Madeleine, how far are we from the main land?"

"About fifty miles."

"Very good. How far is the nearest Catholic chapel from this?"

"St. Inigoes, the nearest, Madame, is fifty miles."

"Better! Madeleine, my brother-in-law, your master, his Majesty the King of the Isles, when he was simply Monsieur Henri, used to be a good Catholic."

"And he is so still, Madame."

"But good Catholics are under obligations to hear mass once every Sunday."

"Yes, Madame."

"'Yes, Madame.'" It is very well to say, 'yes, Madame,' but how upon earth do you reconcile the neglect of that duty on the part of your master with your declaration that he is still a good Catholic?"

"But Madame will pardon me. She hastens to conclusions. My master does not neglect his Christian duties."

"Then I should be glad to know how he performs them. You do not mean to say that he goes fifty miles to hear mass at St. Inigoes?"

"No, Madame."

"How then."

"His Holiness the Pope offers up Mass here every Sunday, before breakfast."

"EH?"

"His Holiness the Pope offers up Mass here every Sunday, before breakfast, in the chapel fitted up for that purpose."

"Oh! my head! my head!" cried the poor woman wildly clapping her hands to her temples.

"Is Madame ill?" coolly inquired the mulattoe.

"ILL? Is all the world raving mad? You tell me you impertinent! you impudent! you insolent! outrageous ——! You tell me that the Pope says Mass here every Sunday?"

"Madame can assure herself of that fact," replied Madeleine with an humble, but injured look.

"I shall go mad! I got over your King of the Isles, your Lord High Constable, and your Princess Etoile—but his Holiness the Pope saying Mass here every Sunday—no! I won't endure that!"

"Madame undoubtedly has the privilege to object!"

"Begone!"

"Yes, Madame. But pardon me for delaying long enough to say my master bade me inform you, that High Mass would be celebrated in the chapel this morning; and that Louis would be in attendance to conduct you thither."

"Begone, I say, while I have some rationality left!"

"Certainly, Madame."

"Stop! come back; help me to dress; I will go to the chapel that the dream may be finished and I may wake up the sooner."

Madeleine obediently came back.

Madame quickly made her toilet and left her chamber, at the door of which she found Louis waiting to attend her.

"Louis! is it true that Mass will be celebrated here this morning?"

"Yes, Madame."

"But who will officiate?"

"Our Most Holy Father the Pope!"

"Go to the ——. I mean go on before me."

Madame had nearly permitted herself in her indignation to use profane language.

Louis, undisturbed by his mistress's excitement, walked down before her, until he paused before the door of the chapel, which was one of those pleasant rooms on the first floor.

Madame entered, and found herself in an apartment fitted up as a church.

At the upper extremity stood an altar adorned with sacred pictures and statuettes, wreathed with flowers, and lighted with many wax candles. From a silver censer burning before it, arose a rich aroma that filled the air. Dark, rich transparencies pulled down before the windows produced something of the effect of stained glass, and threw over the scene an atmosphere at once brilliant and solemn. Between every window was some picture of saint, or angel. Rows of neat white benches supplied the place of pews. All the slaves of the Island plantation, dressed in their summer Sunday suits of pure white were here assembled, with a quiet and devout demeanor. Before the altar, with his back to the congregation, stood a very tall and dignified old man in the treple-crowned mitre and the pontifical robes and vestments of his Holiness the Pope.

Madame sank into the nearest seat through the sheer exhaustion produced by an overwhelming astonishment. What did this mean? Who was this person? How dared any subordinate priest, bishop, or archbishop, or even cardinal assume the pontifical robes?

The strains of an organ now arose, swelling on the air. She looked around—saw the organ, it was behind her, and beside the door by which she had entered, but a screen reaching half way up the instrument concealed the organist from her view. What *did* it all mean?

But the mass had commenced, and Madame was too devout a Catholic to stop to think when it was time to pray. So down she dropped upon her knees, and began in the form of the ritual, and in her case no doubt with the exactest truth, to accuse herself of every sin in the catalogue. And in her devotions she forebore to look about or raise her eyes again to the mysterious old man who officiated at the altar.

At last at the conclusion of the solemnities when the celebrant turned round towards the people and solemnly extending his venerable hands intoned "Deus Gratias," (Thanks be to God), Madame raised her eyes, and to her inexpressible scandalization recognized Monsieur Henri!

"Good! This is better than the rest! He is a king all the week and the Pope on Sunday! But it would be a mortal sin in me to allow *this* madness to go on any longer! I would put up with the king for six days, but the Pope! Holy Virgin! no that must be stopped! I'll make an excuse of an errand to town, get him to let me have a barque, and go to the mainland, and to the county seat, and take out a writ of lunacy against him. I will lose no time! I will do this to-morrow."

While Madame thus resolved, the congregation were quietly dispersing. As there was but one outlet to this room, the officiating priest himself came down; and in passing by his guest, he paused, extended his hands over her head in the most solemn and benignant manner, and said, gravely and slowly—

"Benedicite, illustrious daughter!" and then in measured steps passed out.

Sunday, on the Sunrise Island, was a day of Heaven—as the Isle itself was a terrestrial paradise.

The fifty servants, entirely freed from labor at the time, and dressed in their festive garments, wandered about with their children, in couples, trios or groups—over the green fields, beside the singing streams, or along the silvery sanded beech; or they sat in groups under the shady groves; or reposed, stretched at length, beneath some gigantic tree; or gathered in some large arbor around some one of their number, who had been taught to read, and who read to them from the Book of books; or else they united their voices in a psalm of thanksgiving that arose joyously from that green and blooming Island of the sea, filling all the sunny air with music. And the lovely day was followed by a moonlight night, and their Sabbath recreations were closed by the assembling of the whole band of servants, and the singing of an evening hymn. Then after partaking of the simple Sunday supper of coffee, cakes and fruit, served under the trees, they separated for the night.

And Monsieur Henri, no longer pope, but king, sat upon his front piazza, with his niece upon his knee, his sister-in-law beside him, and his two favorite servants Madeleine and Louis near at hand, and watched the departing figures of his people as they defiled off in twos and threes and larger groups, towards their respective neat, white cabins.

"My subjects are happy, I think, my dear sister! At least it is my study to make them so! And And they love me! Yes, they love me! That is what keeps my old age green," said the old man.

And assuredly no people in the world were happier as a commuuity than these dependants of the good old man—these subjects of a self-styled king.

"They seem contented and prosperous," said Madame.

"They have nothing left to wish for, and on their side leave me nothing to desire. Neither have I any cares of government—Louis manages all my affairs," said the old man with a look of infinite content.

The next day, Monday, "His Majesty" requested a private interview with his "august sister," in which he begged that she would give him a full and particular account of her illustrious son, "the Prince," his nephew's misfortunes. And Madame gave a distorted version of the truth—relating that Monsieur Victoire had been condemned to the colonies for conspiring in favor of the Bourbons, and that his young wife an English lady of high rank had abandoned him in his misfortunes. The mind of the old man in attending to this story seemed divided between exalted admiration for the heroism, and profound sorrow for the misfortunes of his nephew.

They then talked of the affairs of the Island. And Madame learned from all she heard and saw, that Monsieur Henri De L'Ile, notwithstanding his monomania, and perhaps even *because* of it, was one of the best of masters and wisest of rulers—truly deserving to be called by the three-fold titles that he claimed of King, Priest and Father of his people.

He had, on first coming to the Island, found Louis and Madeleine—a bright intelligent brother and sister, the former twenty, the latter ten years of age. He had taught them both to read, write, and keep accounts. They were both perfectly devoted to his person and interests, and in the twenty years of his residence on the Island, an attachment had grown up between himself and them, that more nearly resembled the confidential friendship of equals, than the relative regard of master and servants. Yet their reverential affection for their master amounted to idolatry. No absurdity of which the old man through his monomania might be guilty, could provoke from their respectful countenances a smile. They seemed really to wish to believe him to be a king, rather than to admit him to be a madman. Never for an instant was their guarded reverence for him surprised and betrayed. No matter how sudden, startling, and perplexing the questions, put by Madame upon the subject of their master's madness—their answers were always ready, grave, respectful and uncompromising.

"Pray, how long has it been since Monsieur Henri has enjoyed the dignity of being a king all the week and a pope on Sunday?" inquired Madame of Louis, that identical Monday morning.

"To us, ever since he first announced himself as such, Madame," replied Louis, with an humble bow.

"Pray, has Monsieur Henri friends and neighbors on the main land?" questioned the lady of Madeleine.

"Very many, Madame."

"And do they know that he is mad?"

"They cannot know that, since he is not Madame," replied the woman, deferentially.

And Madame never could surprise either Louis or Madeleine, or any other servant on the plantation, into the slightest betrayal of a suspicion that anything was amiss with their master's brain.

This brother and sister were the mainstays of their old master. Louis managed his farm, orchard, vineyard, garden and fishery, and attended to the sale of the products of the whole. Madeleine kept his house, table and wardrobe in order, and nursed him through any indisposition. Madame saw at once that she herself was a supernumerary in the establishment; that the position assigned to her was that of a most honored guest, most welcome to remain for ever, but neither expected nor desired to take any trouble, or assume any responsibility in the government of the family. Now this position was by no means acceptable to her feelings and she resolved to carry into immediate execution her purpose of going that day to the mainland to apply for a writ of lunacy in behalf of her brother-in-law. Having ascertained from Monsieur Henri, that the Island belonged to the county of Northampton and that the county town was Eastville, she begged that he would allow her the use of the barque and the men to work it to take her to that town, where she said she wished to make some purchases of summer clothing, for herself and the child.

Monsieur Henri, with the most cordial politeness, at once assented, adding that he should do himself the honor of attending his beloved sister.

Now this was quite an unexpected difficulty. His presence must defeat her object. She therefore begged that he would not take the trouble to accompany her, and entreating that he would regard his ease and health.

But Monsieur De L'Ile was not to be exceeded in politeness. He assured his sister-in-law, that to attend her to Eastville would afford him unmixed gratification. And he further informed her that he himself had business at the court-house, that required his immediate attention.

There was therefore nothing for her to do but to submit to necessity and trust to circumstances to faver her design. And since he was really himself going to the court-house, that very event might so turn out as to enable her, without difficulty, to deliver him into the hands of the proper authorities for his safe custody. She therefore affected to accept his proffered services with great thankfulness.

He informed her, however, that it would require a whole day to go and return from Eastville, and that therefore if she pleased, he would give orders for the barque to be made ready for service by sunrise next morning.

To that feature of the plan, also, she assented with seeming gratitude.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

A GOOD BILL.—A gentleman whose house was repairing, went one day to see how the work progressed, and observing a quantity of nails lying about, said to the carpenter, "Why don't you take care of these nails? they'll certainly be lost." "No," replied the carpenter, "you'll find them in the bill."

ERNEST AND EUSTACE.

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

One had mild beauty like some blue-eyed girl's,
And red lips half apart;
With midnight in his eye and on his curls,
The other awed the heart.

The fair boy's mind was like a dreamy haze
Around a lonely lyre;
But ah, that dark youth! in his restless gaze
There was too much of fire.

Each had a form and face of faultless mold—
But classic charms may bear
A something sad, and shadowy and cold:
This did their features wear.

One loved the grandeur of the whirlwind's rush,
And the pine forest's gloom;
And one the starlight and the sunset's blush,
And the young rose's bloom.

True to their natures, one climbed splendid heights,
And heard wild winds wail there,
And braved the storms of many blackened nights,
To see fame's lightnings glare!

And shaded his dark beauty with a wreath
That burned his lonely brow;
The other chose a quiet home beneath
The myrtle tree's green bough.

The daring wanderer on the steeps of fame
Grew weary in his pride—
Turned from the echo of his worshiped name,
And cursed his gods—and died!

The peaceful dreamer in the vales of love,
Lived in the light of smiles,
And, with a murmured blessing, passed above
To rest in starry isles.

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THE WIDOW OF TOLEDO.

A TALE OF

"LOW BIRTH AND IRON FORTUNE."

BY DR. S. P. BRONSON.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1857, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

CHAPTER XXI.—Continued.

Leon remembered Paul's sorrowful air, and his kisses in the afternoon; the gloom that was upon his brow, the tears that were in his eye, the melancholy that had been upon him for many days: but he could go no further, for the boy had declined to tell the cause, and without a clue to guide him, the young man was like one at sea. But he knew now that the kisses were those of a last farewell, that they were the pensive adieu of a consuming grief, and that he had looked upon his favorite for the last time.

And his tears fell fast and hot, and the silence around him grew more and more profound, and the lamp to throw out feebler rays.

And while he thought and wept, there fell upon his ear a sound as of a pitying sigh; and looking up he saw flitting past, between him and the light, a something, he knew not what, but resembling a butterfly winging itself away between him and the sun. It was but for a moment—long enough for the eye to rest upon it, and—it was gone.

And then a something seemed to knock at his heart and to tell him that his sobs and tears were vain—that the boy was dead, but safe, and had found rest from his untold grief in the brighter and better land.

And his tears ceased, and divesting him for bed, he lay down and dreamed that he had gone on in years to the silver of old age—that love and riches and honors had been his all the way; but that life would have been happier, love sweeter, riches more welcome, and honors brought more joy, had fortune but spared to him his poor country boy.

But sorrow, though it smite heavily, as it sometimes will, may shake the heart, but does not often kill. In Leon's case, the widow's wit, the widow's beauty, and the widow's smiles, soon restored him, if not to perfect, at least to tranquil happiness. The excitement of court life, too, tended to mitigate his grief; and as, thanks to his feat in the brigand's cave, his commanding presence, his chivalrous love of honor, and his relationship to the Count de Vega, whom the king, the queen, and the prime minister, appeared specially anxious to conciliate, he was high in favor at the palace, it was not strange, all things considered, his youth among the rest, that his sober sadness melted away by degrees.

Four weeks after the disappearance of Paul, he led the beautiful widow to the altar. The king, at the queen's suggestion, played the father's part and gave away the bride. The church of the Visitation was thronged by the nobility and the fashion of the metropolis to witness the ceremony, which was performed amid the booming of cannon and such other demonstrations of rejoicing as the royal Charles knew so well how to get up for those whom he wished to honor.

The priest, having pronounced the pair one, dismissed them to their honey-moon, which, at the bride's suggestion, it was concluded should be spent at the lady's house in Toledo.

Horses were in readiness, and the bridal party at once set out.

As they crossed the bridge dividing the city, to strike into the mountains, their attention was arrested by a body floating on the water, and gliding with the tide on its way out to sea.

It was that of the country lad, which the concussion of the nuptial cannon had shaken from its place in the river's bed and raised to the surface.

Leon recognized the face, and shuddered. He would have stopped, but for fear of wounding the feelings of his bride. As it was, he rode forward to a fisherman, and calling his attention to the corse, dropped a purse into his hand, and bade him rescue it and give it Christian burial. This done, he returned to his party, which shortly after disappeared in the pass to the mountains.

But the bride, though without permitting it to appear, had also recognized the body. And she remembered her remark to the waiting-woman:

"True love stands not in the way of the happiness of the object of its affection: *it retires*. Yes," added the lady to herself, "her's was true love indeed. Poor girl!"

And smiling at a merry jest from the groomsman, she dropped a tear in her heart to the memory of her favorite.

She never told her husband the story of her rival; and Leon never suspected that his Paul was any other than an artless country lad. To have revealed to him the truth, would have done no good; while delicate consideration for a virtuous maiden's fame suggested the propriety of silence.

CHAPTER XXII.

CONCLUSION.

Great was the consternation and amazement in the kitchen on learning from the courier sent forward to announce the coming, and to order preparations for the reception of the bridal party, the name of the honored bridegroom.

Cook could not believe it; butler was grave and red; porter uneasy and pale; chambermaid in a quandary; laundress doubtful. They remembered their insinuations against *that* young man, and already felt their wages in their hands and themselves wandering with rueful faces in search of a new place. Gardener and general waiting-maid alone were free from fear. The trembling culprits, once the first shock of the intelligence had passed away, made herculean efforts to persuade themselves and each other that they had never uttered a word for which, in case of treachery by any of their number, they could be called to account.

Butler was the first to speak up for himself.

"I am glad of this," he observed. "I have always entertained the highest respect for that young man. I always thought him above his station. It could be easily seen that he was of better blood than one would look for in a mere secretary. I knew that he would turn out to be a great man, in time; and I always said that if the truth was known, he would be entitled to a high place."

"Meaning thereby," said gardener, with a significant gesture, expressive of putting a rope around somebody's neck, and lifting him up and letting him fall.

"No such thing, sir," returned butler, very red with virtuous indignation. "I deny the infamous imputation. How dare you, sir, slander an honest man in this way! You are a dangerous person, sir!"

Gardener shrugged his shoulders with a dry laugh.

"So he is," said cook. "And you ought to be ashamed of yourself, sir—so you ought!"

Gardener laughed again.

"I for my part," said porter, "can bear witness to the very respectful manner with which my noble friend, the butler, has always spoken of senor Leon, whom he has always made it a point to treat with the most careful consideration. I cannot call to mind a single disrespectful remark on the part of my noble friend against that worthy gentleman; and I am sure that no one in this company, who loves the truth, will say that he or she ever heard him make use of a remark derogatory to the gallant senor's character."

"There, sir!" exclaimed butler, snapping his thumb in mingled indignation and triumph, at gardener.

"Quite right!" said cook, standing up for butler.

Gardener contemptuously shrugged his shoulders.

"I would not be egotistical," continued the porter, modestly brushing up his hair, "but I think I can safely challenge all here to state they ever heard *me* utter a word in disparagement of the noble senor Leon, whom I have ever regarded with sentiments of the most exalted esteem. My honored friend, the butler, who has always known my private views, will, I am sure, bear me out in this!"

"With pleasure, sir!" said butler, warmly pressing his hand. "You are an honest man, and worthy of the confidence of honest men, sir!"

"And so will I," cried cook, looking defiance at gardener.

"And I," said laundress, who was engaged to porter. "I have had my eye upon my dear friend the porter a long time, and have never yet seen in him aught unbecoming to a gentleman. I have noticed that he is honest and truthful in all things; but especially in what is due to others. He would no more say an unworthy word of an absent person, than put his hand in the fire. But of all men the senor Leon is the last he would breathe a word against. I have often heard him speak of him, and always in terms of the very highest respect. As for me, cook knows, and so does everybody, that I have invariably called the senor Leon the most accomplished gentleman I ever saw in my life."

"Quite right!" said cook.

"I can answer for the respectful manner with which you have ever mentioned the noble senor!" observed the butler, taking laundress's hand.

"And I for yours!" said laundress.

"I feel," remarked chambermaid, "that if I were on my oath I should say that I have never heard cook, butler, porter, or laundress utter one word against the noble gentleman who has married the mistress. Whenever they have had occasion to introduce him into conversation, it was with a proper regard for his dignity, as for that of a gentleman whose nice sense of honor there could be no question. If they have *appeared* to do otherwise, in the presence of certain persons (with a side glance at gardener and general waiting-maid), it was designedly, *for* the purpose of drawing out certain persons, the favorableness of whose sentiments towards the noble senor they had good reasons to suspect!"

"Quite right!" said cook.

"You are a very amiable young woman," said butler, shaking chambermaid warmly by the hand, "and your discernment does you credit!"

"I am sure I always thought well of you," said porter, generously.

"And I," said laundress, embracing her.

"With these facts before me," continued chambermaid, with modest firmness, "I am quite ready, in case certain persons should wish to carry tales for the purpose of making mischief, to give my testimony whenever and wherever I shall be called on so to do. Certain persons needn't think to have their own way forever. I have eyes, and can see; ears, and can hear; but I will not say a word now—no, not one word. There are things which, if mentioned to mistress, might make certain persons uncomfortable. But I shall not be the first to carry tales. I have a principle that is against getting my fellow-servants into trouble. But if certain persons should set me the example, I don't know what I might do. There *are* things—but I will not say a word now; no, not one word. But this I *will* say, cook, porter, butler and laundress have ever stood up for the mistress's noble husband as they would for the dearest and most respected friend they had in the world. And I know they will say the same of me!"

"Quite right!" said cook.

"You could not have been more considerate if the senor had been your own brother!" said butler.

"I can bear witness to the truth of that," said porter.

"And I," said laundress.

And all looked defiance at "some persons."

Gardener shrugged his shoulders with a dry laugh, and general waiting-maid went off in a paroxysm of high mirth.

Of course neither had any intention of "carrying tales for the purpose of making mischief;" and nothing worse came to the denizens of the kitchen than their fright.

A wedding, on a scale of rare liberality and splendor, followed the arrival of the bridal party; and for a week nothing else was talked of in Toledo.

The marriage, however, we find it necessary to remark, did not give universal satisfaction. The great host of young gentlemen who had counted themselves among the fair lady's admirers, and each of whom had confidently looked forward to winning her hand and spending her fortune, were, individually and collectively, sadly put out. They were not pleased with the turn which affairs had taken at all. The pockets of many of them were not so deep as was desirable; their tailors were urgent for their little bills, and their wash-women were getting furious with impatience. "Under these circumstances," they naturally felt a lively interest in the revenues of the widow, who, they thought, might have made a worthier choice.

The Marquis Carlos de Sorbano, on hearing of the matter, was so indignant that he shut himself up in his room for a month, and would see no one under any consideration. He nearly devoured himself to death with spleen, and swore any number of oaths of vengeance against the bridegroom. Fortunately for that personage, however, and perhaps also for himself, he never attempted to carry them into effect; which, it may be, was owing, wholly or in part, to the fact that his arms were no longer capable of wielding a sword. He had in addition a wholesome awe of the ex-secretary, of whose superior abilities in the duello he was himself a living, if not a delighted witness.

A few days after the wedding, the Viceroy and his friend the superintendent called to congratulate the happy pair.

"I had wished," said the Viceroy, pleasantly, to the bride, "to take the young gentleman into my service; but it appears, dear lady, it was already decided that he should enter none but Love's!"

"Whose wages, prince," returned the blushing senora, "are higher than any the state can offer!"

"We all think so, in our youth!" laughed the Viceroy.

"If," said the superintendent, with a roguish smile, as he squeezed the ex-secretary's hand, "you should find, after your honeymoon, that there is danger of your degenerating into a grave, staid, hum-drum sort of husband, and should hanker after the bachelor society of old times, call at the palace and the prince and I will endeavor to make you comfortable. I have been remarking to your lord, madam," he added, turning to the lady, "that in case he at any time should be so unfortunate as to incur your frowning displeasure, he can fly for happiness to us. Mind, we don't say this to make you jealous!"

"But I *shall* be," returned the lady, "if your lordships succeed in making your society more attractive to him than I shall mine!"

"If you seriously enter the lists with us, madam," rejoined the superintendent, gallantly, "then I fear we shall have to spend our evenings without him!"

The woman-hating count was the next to offer his good wishes.

"Permit me, fair lady," he said, "to thank you for the wisdom and the excellence of your choice. I feel an interest in the happiness of my young friend, and I am sure that in your hands it will be cared for."

"As my own, count," was the reply.

"I rejoice senor," continued the woman-hater, to the bridegroom, "that fortune has at length restored your proper position. I do not admire women, in the abstract," he added, confidentially, "and have a pious sympathy for every unfortunate wight who loses his freedom by their blandishments or their wiles. They regard poor, innocent men as their legitimate prey, and many a brave fellow is plucked to pieces whose deserts should have entitled him to a better fate. They deliberately lead their victims like lambs to the slaughter, and exult in their capture and their ruin. The most dreadful punishment I could wish to my worst enemy would be a dose of matrimony. That tames a man. The whipping-post is nothing to it. As for me, I had rather be hanged than married; and yet, friend, I somehow envy *you*. A something in your lady tells me that you have not been taken in. I think, sir, all things considered, that you have done well. Nay, I will go further, and say, that if I had a very dear brother, whose happiness was dear to me, I think I should not object to his making this lady my sister!"

But the woman-hater was not the last to offer his gratulations. He had scarcely taken his departure, when our illustrious friend, Pequilo, who, on the strength of his mountain adventure, considered himself an intimate acquaintance of the lady, presented himself, wishing the pair all manner of marital joys, and fraternally suggested that in case of an heir, he would recommend St. Catherine as a patron that would watch faithfully over the interests of the child.

Two years later, Ramirez went down gracefully and with dignity to the tomb; six months previous to which event, he had retired from office and recommended Don Garcia de Vega as his successor. The king acted on the suggestion, and obtained for his reward a capable and an energetic minister.

Donna Isabel worthily did the honors of her noble father-in-law's palace, and proved to Leon a kind and true and gentle wife as ever fell to the lot of a Spanish gentleman. Fortune smiled upon their union; and loving and loved, their days glided away serenely.

They were blessed with two children—the one a gallant boy, the other a lovely girl. The first, Leon had the naming of, and he proudly called him Paul, in honor of his poor country lad. The naming of the second was left to Donna Isabel, who called her Ximene, after, as the lady said, a once "very dear friend."

And thus the hapless waiting-woman, whose heart-passion was so plaintive and whose end so full of sadness, had two bright monuments to keep her sweet memory ever green in the sunny after-time; not in the world's mind, for the world knew her not; but in the breast of her successful yet pitying rival, and in that of him whom with all the ardor and the devotion of her being, she so touchingly, so intensely, loved.

THE END.

◆

PHYSICAL LAZINESS.

Physical laziness is one of the most destructive vices of the age. It causes weak, flabby, "sposhy" bodies, which are always getting out of sorts, and are so weak that a strong mind is completely thrown away upon one. In fact, a strong mind in a weak body is like a superior knife-blade in a weak and miserable handle. Its workmanship may be ever so finished, its temper ever so true, its edge ever so keen; but, for want of means to wield it properly, it will not cut to much purpose. Ambitious youths who intend to carve out fame and fortune with their sharp intellects, should think of this *simile*, and see to it that their bodies—the handles whereby they are to manage that wonderful weapon, the human mind—are kept in sound-jointed, firmly riveted, perfectly cleansed condition.

◆

A Good One.—In the bull-fighting days a Wednesbury blacksmith, who was rearing a bull-pup, induced his old father to go on all-fours and imitate the bull. The canine pupil pinned the old man by the nose. The son, disregarding the paternal roaring, exclaimed, "Hold him, Growler boy, hold him! bear it, feyther, bear it! *it'll be the the making of the pup.*"

THE THINKERS.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

Blessed are the stalwart sowers
In the pleasant fields of thought!
Blest the ploughers, and the mowers,
And the generous harvest brought!

O'er them flows the silver shadow
Of the tree of life, all day;
For them bloom in vale and meadow,
Flowers that will not fade away!

On their brows blush amaranth blossoms,
Wound with deathless olive leaves;
And they bear, on broad white bosoms,
God's divinest, ripened sheaves!

Go out workers! go out early!
Sow the seeds of noblest thought;
Down by rivers still, and pearly,
Shall your golden sheaves be brought;

When the world's great heart sublimely
Throbs a full calm, as of yore,
And beside immortal waters
Angels walk with men once more!

◆

THE "LITTLE INNOCENTS."

BY A NEW CONTRIBUTOR.

"He is a very sick child," said the doctor, in answer to the mother's eager inquiries.

"Do you think him in danger?" The mother's face grew white, and her lips quivered.

The doctor, instead of replying to this question, gave some minute directions about the administration of certain medicines, and then turned from the luxurious bed upon which the child lay.

"How soon will you come again?" The mother, in her anxiety, caught hold of the doctor's arm, and held him fast.

"In the course of three or four hours. By that time the action of the medicine will be fully apparent. Give it punctually, and according to directions."

"Can't you remain?" urged the distressed mother, whose fears the doctor's unsatisfactory manner had aroused to the highest degree. "Oh, stay with him! There may be changes in an hour that your eyes should see. His life is in your hands, doctor; his precious life! Do not leave us!"

"Not in my hands, but in the hands of Him who holds the issues of life," replied the doctor. "We are but the instruments of healing."

"A little longer, doctor! stay a little longer!" urged the mother, scarcely rising a single degree in her perceptions above that first blind confidence in the physisician's skill. But the doctor said:—

"That is impossible. Duty calls me to other bedsides. There is, but a short distance from here, a poor woman's only child as sick as yours, and as imperatively requiring my utmost skill. I must see it with as little delay as possible."

A poor woman's child! The mother turned half offended from the physician, and as he withdrew, sat down by the bed on which her sick boy lay, and taking one of his hot hands, covered it with tears and kisses.

A poor woman's child! A washerwoman's, perhaps; or the common, coarse offspring of a mere sempstress! or of a German or Irish woman, living in a garret, and dirt and disorder! And, for one such, her physician could leave the pure, sweet infant that lay suffering before her, of more value in her eyes than a thousand poor women's children.

"I couldn't have believed it of him!" sobbed the mother, in her selfishness and fear.

From the merchant's luxurious palace, into which disease had stolen on invisible wings, and stricken down the hope and pride of the house, the physician passed, and, in a few minutes, entered one of the meanest looking houses in the neighborhood. The rich mother had not been far wrong in her conjecture. This visit was to a washerwoman's child. Up two naked, sand-covered pairs of stairs the doctor went, and, pausing at a door in the third story, rapped lightly, and then, without waiting for the door to be opened, lifted the latch, and went in.

"Oh, doctor! I'm so glad you have come!" A pale, anxious-looking woman, with soiled and rumpled garments, and uncombed hair, sat, holding a child in her arms. All of the preceding night, she had held him upon her lap, for he was too ill to sleep, and cried whenever she laid him upon the bed.

"How is he this morning?" inquired the doctor, as he sat down by the poor woman, and looked closely at the sick babe.

"Not any better. He's had a very bad night."

The doctor felt his pulse, examined his skin, noted the character of his respiration, and asked of the mother various questions relating to symptoms—all with a carefulness and interest as marked as he had shown at the visit just paid to the child of wealth and luxury. And quite as eagerly did this poor mother watch his countenance, and hang upon his few, unsatisfactory words, as did the mother from whom he had parted a litttle while before. To her heart, her babe was equally precious. Born though it was in poverty, and nurtured in toil, its presence was like sunlight in her humble dwelling, and its cooing voice the music that cheered her toil, and made her half forget the sadness of her recent widowhood.

"Do you think he will die, doctor?"

"While there is life there is hope," said the doctor, evading, with the old phrase, a direct answer.

"He is very sick?" The tearful mother still urged for some expression of opinion.

"He is a sick child. But, we will try the virtue of medicine, and trust in the Great Physician."

"Won't you come again to-day?" A harder heart than the doctor's could not have resisted that pleading look and tone.

"Yes. I will be round again in a few hours. In the meantime, give this medicine according to direction."

Three hours later, the doctor entered the palace-home of the rich mother. There was a troubled look on the face of the servant who attended him; but he asked no questions. At the door of the sick chamber he paused a few moments, and listened; all within was still as death. Then he entered, but so softly, that none seemed to be aware of his presence. Around the bed, on which the child lay, stood a group of four or five persons, among them a clergyman who had been sent for, in haste, to comfort with words of heavenly import the heart of the mother, about to suffer its greatest earthly sorrow.

On the babe's ashen face, the death-seal was so clearly impressed, that no eyes could be mistaken in the sign. Hope was extinguished even in the mother's heart.

How still it was in that luxurious chamber! Respiration was half suspended. In the presence of the dying babe, all felt a pervading consciousness of a diviner presence. It seemed as if angels were about the child, waiting to bear upward its pure spirit, just struggling to free itself from mortal investure. All but the mother stood up reverently, yet bending with earnest looks towards the beautiful babe—beautiful still, even though blighted with sickness—but she sat cowering down at the bedside, her arm crushing the pillow on which the child lay, and her white face so full of anguish, that all eyes that looked upon it grew wet with tears.

Silently the doctor glided in, and made one of the waiting group. The babe's sight was veiled—the snowy lids having closed over the blue orbs that danced in light and beauty a few days before. The mouth, which pain had disfigured, was gradually recovering its sweet expression; and even while the change was passing, the image of a smile left thereon its soft imprint.

So gradual was the transition—so merciful was the angel of death in his work of separating from mortal bonds the immortal spirit—that none who gazed on the infant knew the precise moment when the heart ceased to beat, and the lungs to respire.

First to move, in that statue-like group, was the clergyman. He was standing close beside the mother, whose blinding tears hid from her the true aspect of her babe's face. Bending towards her, he said, in a voice low, penetrating, and full of spiritual comfort,—

"For of such is the kingdom of heaven!"

His words broke the spell. A wild cry from the mother's lips rent the air, and quivering sobs filled the apartment.

Ended, here, was the physician's work, and so, going noiselessly out, he departed, leaving the mourners in their sorrow, and with their dead. His duties were to the living.

His next visit was to the washer-woman's child. As he opened the door of the humble room he had left a few hours before, he saw the poor mother sitting, as he had last seen her, holding in her arms her sick babe. It needed no second glance to tell him that here, too, the physician's work was done. There was no hope in the mother's tearless face; and no hope on the death-like countenance of the little sufferer.

Alone sat the mother with her dying babe on her lap. There were no friends to condole, no minister of religion to comfort. And yet, in the heart of the rich mother, whose child had just taken its everlasting departure, no purer love found abiding place; and no sadder grief came with its almost hopeless desolation of spirit, as the babe's eyes closed, and the lips, whose smile of beauty made the heart's daily sunshine, grew rigid in death.

"It is too late, doctor!" she said, looking up with a stony aspect, and speaking in a voice so calm and cold, that it almost chilled the physician's heart. "He is dying."

The doctor's work was not all done here. As a physician, his skill was of no further avail; but humanity had claims upon him. So he waited the issue of the struggle between life and death. It was brief, but not violent. The ministration was quite as merciful as in the former case. Very gently the spirit passed. There were no convulsions; no struggles; no evidences of pain; and the room seemed equally pervaded by angelic presence.

At last it was over, and the mother's face now covered with the first outflowing tears that had found vent for hours, was laid, in sorrow that no words could express, down against the cold face of her child.

"Of such is the kingdom of heaven!"

Not formally, nor of previous thought were the words said. They fell from the doctor's lips almost spontaneously, and in tones as reverent and full of meaning as those in which he had heard the same words spoken a little while before. And they were just as true, in every shade of meaning in this case as in the other. Just as precious was this babe in the sight of heaven; just as lovingly was it received by angels; just as beautiful now, is its celestial home; just as happy is it on the flowery slopes, and amid the green, sweet places, of the garden of God.

"Of such is the kingdom of heaven!" Yes of such. Of the pure and the innocent. Of the child-like in spirit. Of those who pass upwards in the innocence of ignorance, as little children; or, in the innocence of wisdom as right living men and women. It matters not for the external condition in either case. Only of *such*—the innocent and pure in spirit—is the Kingdom of Heaven, and they are to be found alike in the palace and in the cottage—among the rich and among the poor; for man is not regarded in heaven as to his externals, but as to his internals.

◆

LITERARY PROFANITY.

There is always connected with true refinement of character, the tenderest regard for the feelings of others. Even where benevolence is not the predominating motive, a man of true dignity of character will never wilfully offend. To those socially beneath him, this quality of mind or heart will exhibit itself, with perhaps more marked distinctness. Especially does such a character revolt at all disrespect of things sacred, if not from the higher sentiment of personal purity and religious veneration, at least from the recognition of those evident decencies of social life, which protect from desecration the subjects of reverence in others.

Perhaps there can be nothing more indicative of both an unrefined and an unsanctified mind, than the flippant use of the language of the Bible to turn a joke or round a paragraph. A Christian man will not so desecrate his charter of a better world. Neither will a gentleman, admitting that such a character can exist apart from that peculiar purity of heart and delicacy of conscience which belongs to Christianity, ever lower himself to the unnecessary and inappropriate use of terms dear to Christian hope and religious adoration.

Upon such a basis it is apparent that we sweep from the arena of all refined society and gentleness of character, the oath-makers, whether of the so-called upper or lower walks of life. Profanity should be denied a home where there dwells any who are pure in heart.

Scarcely less odious to true refinement, and the cultivation of what is really ennobling in human nature, is the profanity of modern literature. Mingled with the roughest language and the slang of villainy, the eye ever and anon is arrested by mock appeals to Heaven, and the use of religious phrases utterly abhorrent to good taste. Such writers invariably associate Fifth Avenue with elegant vice, and Christian profession with hypocrisy. They have neither the wealth of the one nor the faith of the other, and envy, true to her nature,

"Hates the altitude she cannot reach."

◆

A Lucky Fellow.—A man, who was a small manufacturer, had engaged in many local speculations, which had always turned out well, and thereby rendered him a person of some wealth. He bethought him of insuring his life, and he had only just taken out his policy when he fell ill of an acute disease which was certain to end fatally in a few days. The doctor revealed to him his state. "By jingo," cried he, rousing up at once into the old energy, "I shall *do* the insurance company! I was always a lucky fellow!"

◆

Pride.—To quell the pride, even of the greatest, we should reflect how much we owe to others and how little to ourselves.

THE GRAVE AMONG THE OAKS.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

A young and beautiful Virginian, Miss Susan C. Tapscote, being a sufferer from pulmonary disease, spent two winters in the bland atmosphere of Savannah, a few years since. The Destroyer went on in his fearful work, and the Sabbath previous to her death she was driven out to a lovely spot, named "Bonaventure," on the banks of the San Augustine, a creek gliding up from the mouth of the Savannah river; and where was formerly the residence of the Tatnall family. More than a century since, Col. Tatnall, father of the Governor of Georgia, of that name, planted a large expanse with the live-oak, which are now immense trees, and with their huge arms interlocked, and draped with the pendent moss common to that region, form a majestic canopy of shade. Ten years since, it was converted into a cemetery, where not only the descendants of the original proprietor, but others, have found the place of their last repose.

The last visit on earth, of the lovely orphan invalid, was to this spot, where she chose her sepulchre. There, at a distance from friends and relatives, her head was laid under the green turf, by stranger-hands.

An interesting occurrence has recently retouched the memory of the gentle sleeper with new tints of life. During the past winter, a large delegation from Virginia attended a convention held at Savannah, and some of its members drove out to visit her grave. They found it with some difficulty, sheltered by a lofty oak, and encircled by entwining boughs of the holly, myrtle and magnolia. One of their number proposed, in warmly eloquent words, that it should not be permitted to remain thus undesignated, and with chivalrous emotion they unanimously decided to erect a fitting monument, a noble tribute of sympathy and respect for a daughter of their own "ancient Dominion."

Tread lightly 'mid those broad-arm'd oaks
'Neath Georgia's sunny sky,
There volumed mosses, gray and old,
Like banners wave their silken fold,
As though some host were nigh.

Without a host, the Victor came,
Without the trumpet-cry—
He drew no sword—he bent no bow—
But pass'd and laid a victim low
In silent mystery.

A maiden, in her beauty's prime,
With eyes of holy light.
A gentle orphan, loved by all,
On whom no blight had dared to fall,
He did not spare to smite.

Yet blame him not—the deed was kind-
Even tho' in wrath it seem'd;
His shaft was dire—but hers the gain—
To soar above the sphere of pain,
Where cloudless glory stream'd.

Though not in fair Virginian vales,
'Neath her own native skies,
The lifeless sleeper sank to rest,—
Calm walks her spirit with the blest.
Mid groves of Paradise.

FOREST SKETCHES---NO. 29.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

BY COL. WALTER P. DUNLAP.

THE RHINOCEROS.

"Well, boys," said Uncle Abner, as we gathered about him after supper, "I have but little more of adventure to tell you, at least during my African cruise. But I had one little brush that's worth relating.

"We left Atbara and followed the river up towards its source. I wanted to visit Axum, which is only a hundred miles from the sea-coast with a good road over the mountains to the port of Adulis. We were nearly a fortnight in traveling from Atbara to Axum; but we stopped some by the way.

"When we reached our destination I found myself richly repaid for all my trouble. Axum was once the capital of Abyssinia, and must have been a flourishing place; but it is now a vast pile of ruins and ancient walls. There were several monuments standing, and among them was a monolith obelisk sixty feet high, and a number of prostrate ones beside."

"What's a *monolith?*" asked Ben.

"It is a monument or obelisk made from a single stone."

"And sixty feet high?" pursued Ben, incredulously.

"O, yes," returned our host. "And the traveler through Egypt will find some works of human hands far ahead of that in wonder. However, there were many things worth seeing at Axum, and I spent a week there very profitably. There was a Christian church, in which the old chronicles of the place were kept, and many sculptures and inscriptions of interest.

"To the south-east, at the base of the mountains, was quite a forest, while to the west stretched away a broad desert. One day I took my rifle and pistols, and with my two followers in company, started off upon a sort of prospecting tour, our host assuring us that we should find plenty of huts upon the edge of the forest if we should choose to remain away over night. My idea was, to poke around as long as I could find anything worth looking after.

"Towards the middle of the afternoon we came to a place where a point of desert made up into the woods just like a bay upon the sea-shore. At the outer edge the distance was all of half-a-mile from point to point of the woods, and the bay itself was about the same distance in depth. We started to cross this sand-bay about half way from the mouth of the inner point. It was quite hard and very smooth, the sand being fine and heavy. Its color was very near the same as our common red free-stone, though perhaps a little lighter.

"The distance across where we went was not over twenty rods, and I stopped when about half way over to gaze around me. I never saw a more perfect illusion. It appeared exactly as though I stood upon the bosom of a watery bay. Upon three sides was a line of forest trees, while away upon the fourth stretched a sea the bound of which was beyond my ken. The sand sparkled in the strong sunlight, and at a very short distance these sparkling atoms entirely overcame the deep red color of the desert. Finally I started on again, and had come to within a rod or so of the wood, when a movement among some underbrush attracted my attention.

"This underbrush was a sort of evergreen, with very thick, matted boughs, and spread its foliage clear to the ground. I stopped as I saw the movement, and gazed upon the spot. At first I could see nothing; but pretty soon I was sure I saw an eye. I moved a step nearer, and not only saw what must be an eye, but I saw the end of a horn, too. For some moments I watched these two points carefully, and I was sure I had not been mistaken. There was an eye, bright and piercing, and not large, and a horn. It was an antelope, I felt certain. I raised my rifle to my shoulder, and fired.

"The sound of the report was quickly followed by a cry that caused me to start back. It was a loud, thundering bellow, half way between a deep, gutteral grunt and the call of a full grown calf. I heard this, and then I saw the foliage separate, and a huge monster burst forth with a body like an elephant's!

"'*A rhinoceros!*' cried Abdac, turning upon his heel and running with all his might.

"His cry had attracted the animal's attention, and as he started to run the rhinoceros gave him chase. Of course I breathed more easily as I found myself thus freed from immediate danger, but I trembled for my companion.

"The animal I had thus started from his cover was larger than I had ever supposed the rhinoceros to grow. He was very near twelve feet long, from his snout to the insertion of his tail, and the distance around his body was the same. Thus you will see that he almost equals the elephant; but his legs are short—so short that the hanging belly almost touches the ground as he walks. The head is broad and hog-like, with straight ears; small, piercing eyes; and an upper lip heavy and flappy, which can be moved in almost any direction, and with which the animal gathers up the grass and foliage he means to eat.

"But the most striking feature—and I assure you it is *striking* enough to those whom he attacks—is his horn. This grows upon the top of his snout, and is, without exception, the most powerful weapon possessed by any animal. It is as hard as any horn can be; very solid; and grows to be even three feet long, though it is generally shorter than that. The skin is thick and hard, and without hair, save here and there a few stiff bristles. It is so hard that the edge of a sword will not penetrate it, and it will even turn a rifle ball in most parts, though there are points where a bullet will enter and kill. This skin lies in folds upon the haunches and shoulders, and where these folds are it must be very near impenetrable.

"And yet the rhinoceros can run quite swiftly. He goes at a rolling, plunging, uncouth gait, and few men can outrun him.

"I sprang to loading my rifle as quickly as possible, and in the meantime I kept an eye upon the chase. I saw Abdac gain the wood, and then he disappeared, with the enraged monster close at his heels. In a few moments more I started across the plain, and as I gained the point where my companion had entered I heard him cry out. The voice sounded above me, and upon looking up I saw Abdac perched away in the top of a tree.

"'Where's the rhinoceros?' I asked, in a loud tone. And I discovered where he was without asking again. My voice had startled him, and he turned from the tree up which Abdac had taken refuge, and dashed after me!

"The rhinoceros is about the only animal that never eats flesh that will attack man out of mere malevolence. But he will do it, though not always. Sometimes the traveler may pass him without danger; while at another he will rush from his cover into the midst of a party without provocation or warning.

"But this individual had provocation in plenty. I could see blood trickling from his nose, but I could not stop to see where it came from. As he came out I turned and ran. Had I been wise I should have darted into the wood close at hand and mounted a tree; but it was too late now. I could run then. I was light and spry, and knew how to use my legs. Across the plain I flew; keeping my eyes busy, as well as my feet, in looking for a tree up which I could leap without trouble. I saw one at length. Or, rather, there were two of them which grew together, seeming to cross each other not far from the ground.

"The rhinoceros was close behind me. He puffed like a locomotive, and I fancied I could feel the earth shake beneath me as his feet came down upon the hard sand.

"Mada shouted for me to look out. But there was no need of his warning, for I knew too well that the beast was close to me, and at every leap I expected to feel the fatal horn. I clung to my rifle, for I knew if I gained the tree I should need it, and if I didn't gain it I could spare the weapon as well as not.

"But you may be sure that I was not long in running across that plain. Not over two minutes at the outside; but they seemed long minutes to me. The trees I had selected stood directly at the edge of the sand, and there were branches within five feet of the ground. They were a sort of stunted teak, or oak, if I remember rightly. The same trees grow to a large size in the forest, but upon the edge of this desert they were not so thrifty.

"The last rod was a narrow squeak. I heard Mada yelling with all his might; and I heard the voice of Abdac in chorus. First they would cry out for me to *run*, and then they'd shout with an aim to attract the attention of my pursuer; but their efforts amounted to nothing in result, for I was running as swiftly as possible, and nothing short of death could have turned the infuriate beast from his purpose.

"The tree was gained at length. I heard the brute behind me, and I knew he was close upon me. As I placed my hand upon the lower limb I noticed that his breathing, or puffing, was stopped, and that, too, with a frightful gnash of the huge jaws. My heart leaped fearfully, for, by a sort of instinct, I knew that he had gathered himself for a blow!

"My hand touched the lower branch, and at the same moment I threw my rifle over another, and, with all my power, I made the spring. At the very instant on which I gave the leap the trees received a shock that came nigh throwing me off. They swayed to and fro as though beneath the crash of lightning!

"But I held on—and I was safe! As soon as I could gain my senses and my breath I looked down. There stood the rhinoceros, right below me, with his nose poked in between the trees. At first I thought he was trying to uproot them. He pulled and pushed, and lifted and tugged, with a power that shook me in my perch. Presently the monster began to bellow with a voice like thunder. This he kept up a while, and then he commenced to pull and tug again.

"Aha! I saw it now. The fellow was fast! Caught like a pigeon in a snare! He had gathered all his strength for a blow at me, and in his blind rage he had not counted the exact chances of hitting his mark.

"The two trees were very near the same size—say, a foot in diameter at the trunk—and where they crossed each other they not only lapped together, but had become kind of socketed,—that is, let into each other, as you would halve the logs of a cabin together. The rhinoceros had struck his huge horn directly upon the point where the two trees lapped, and, driven by the full force of his gigantic body, it had entered nearly to the snout.

"As soon as I was calm enough to reason I saw that he could not get away without breaking his horn, unless he had the power to pry the tress apart; for the horn, which turned back towards the point, had been driven in with an upward course, so that, in order to draw it out, he would have to pull downward. The weight of his body gave him no advantage. All the strain was upon the neck. I saw enough to satisfy me that the monster was fast, and then I came down; and as soon as my companions saw me upon terra-firma they came running up.

"Of course we did not like to trust the entrapped monster too long, so we proceeded to despatch him at once. I placed the muzzle of my rifle near his eye, aiming so that the ball should penetrate the centre of the brain, and then fired. At the same moment Abdac, who had two bullets in his long musket, took aim beneath the fold of the fore shoulder, and found the beast's heart.

"As the two reports broke almost simultaneously upon the air the rhinoceros gave a mighty leap backward, snapping his massive horn off close to the snout, and falling back upon his haunches. He gained his feet, but he could not run. He staggered a few steps—then swayed to and fro as he tried in vain to steady himself—and in a moment more he fell upon his side with a shock that seemed to make the very plain quake.

"Mada cut the horn out with his short axe, and we then moved on. Two hours afterwards we reached a little hamlet, of half-a-dozen huts, and when we informed the natives what we had done, they took their knives and horses, and posted off after the carcass.

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FRIENDSHIP.

Friendship, like love, is but a name,
Unless to one you stint the flame.
The child, whom many fathers share
Hath seldom known a father's care.
'Tis thus in friendship, who depend
On many, rarely find a friend.

WORDS—THOUGHTS—ACTIONS.

They are all important, and every one of them tells upon our present life and future state. The effect of an action—a thought—a word, may not be immediately evident, it may never be discovered by us or other mortals, but it is *there;* it is in our lives, and it will continue to work upon our destiny for evil or good when our bodies shall lie mouldering beneath the sod. Like flakes of snow that fall unperceived upon the earth, the seeming unimportant events of life succeed one another; and, as the snow gathers together—as the avalanche is formed, so are our habits established and our character determined. No single flake that is added to the drift produces a sensible change; no single action creates, however it may exhibit, a man's character; but as the tempest hurls the avalanche down the mountain, and overwhelms inhabitants and habitations, so passion, acting upon the elements of mischief which pernicious habits have brought together, by imperceptible accumulations, may overthrow the principles of truth and virtue. How important is it, then, that we maintain the most sleepless guard upon our passions, and scrupulously weigh our every word, thought, and action.

"LUCK."

We hear a good deal about "good luck" and "bad luck." If a person has prospered in business, he is said to have had "good luck." If he has failed, he has had "bad luck." If he has been sick, good or bad luck is said to have visited him, accordingly as he got well or died. Or, if he has remained in good health, while others have been attacked by some epidemic disease, he has had the "good luck" to escape that with which others have had the "bad luck" to be seized.

Now, these habitual expressions about "luck," whether good or bad, are the offspring of atheism. They ignore the idea of Divine Providence, which, Christianity teaches us, superintends the affairs of men, and virtually refer all events to "chance,"—that undefined Divinity at whose shrine ignorance and superstition are so often found worshipping.

If, young man, you have been dreaming of "luck," dream of it no longer! Start out into the business world with more rational, and, therefore, higher and nobler feelings. Let such words as *probity, perseverance, energy, skill,* &c., make up the motto on *your* coat-of-arms or shield, not "chance" and "luck." They are the only ones that are reliable. In them, and not in "luck," the secret of success lies.

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TRUTH SIMPLY EXPRESSED.—It is not what people eat, but what they digest that makes them strong. It is not what they gain, but what they save that makes them rich. It is not what they read, but what they remember that makes them learned. It is not what they profess, but what they practise, that makes them righteous. These are very plain and important truths, too little heeded by gluttons, spendthrifts, bookworms, and hypocrites.

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"I'LL take your part," as the dog said when he robbed the cat of her portion of the dinner.

DON'T DESPAIR.

You say you are discouraged. Things do not go with you as prosperously as you anticipated at the commencement of the year. Such and such an one of your acquaintance has been "more lucky." He seems to be driving a much more thriving trade in his line of business, or his crops are promising a much more abundant harvest than yours.

This *may* be all true, though we are inclined to set down part of your despondency to the account of imagination, or—shall we say it?—to even envy. But, suppose it to be just as you say it is, did you ever seriously and honestly put the question to yourself, with whom it is often harder to deal honestly than with other people:—"May it not be my own fault, after all?"

There are certain processes of business which *must* be followed out, as a general rule, to insure success. Have you followed these? We are bound to suppose your more successful neighbor has. If *you* have not, the fault has been your own, and the road of future success is open before you. It is that which he has travelled. Take and follow it, in patience and perseverance, and all will be ultimately right!

If a farmer, and conscious of having lain in bed too late at the seasons of plowing and sowing, while your neighbor was up and at it, or if you chose to idle while he felt it was imperative to work, the failure of your crop, of which you now complain, is referable to a very plain cause—to your own neglect. There was no "bad luck" about it, as you seem to have imagined. It is a fool's speech to say so!

But, no matter how the facts stand—whether you are in fault or not—the feeling of discouragement which you exhibit, will not mend matters. It will neither secure you a more thrifty trade, nor prevent the failure of your present crop. Look, then, to the future, and *don't despair,* till you have tried again, and done your best to retrieve the past!

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THE BOLDEST YET.—A lady went into a store in this city recently to purchase a shawl. Just as she was handing the clerk two fifty dollar bills, she received a blow on the face from a well-dressed person, who exclaimed, "I forbade you buying a shawl," and snatching the money from her hand he evaporated. The lady fainted, and on recovering, the merchant expressed surprise that her husband should have acted so ungentlemanly; but his surprise was greatly increased when the lady informed him that it was not her husband, and that she had never seen him before! The bold thief, however, had made good his escape.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A DISTRESSED WIFE wishes us to administer a rebuke to the British government for not permitting a wife to accompany her husband when he is transported to a penal colony for the term of his natural life. We do not know but the British government *will* permit a wife to accompany her husband, (not being posted up in regard to the criminal law of Great Britain,) but we hope they will *not*. Our correspondent should remember, that when a man forfeits his liberty, he forfeits his rights and privileges as a member of society, and that by taking a wife to infamy with him, he may become the father of children, who must, under such circumstances, be born to almost hopeless misery and degradation—born with a brand upon their forehead. It is not the wife alone whose feelings should be consulted. It is better that she should suffer, and that the suffering should terminate with her, than that it should be entailed on an indefinite number of helpless innocents. Transportation, or imprisonment for life of a husband is divorce; and law, as a moral power, should prevent a woman from making herself and children infamous.

A BACHELOR.—Our caution to you was simply a particular caution to a young man contemplating to enter into matrimony before he had even perfected his professional education, and, of course, had nothing on which he could depend for subsistence. We admit that pure and devoted love, as a stimulus to exertion, is better than a fortune to a young man beginning life. But a bird should never begin to lay its eggs until it has built its nest—cuckoos excepted. Learn domestic wisdom from the feathered tribe; they seldom err.

W. R. M.—At the battle of Talavera, which was fought on the 28th of July, 1809, the French were commanded by Marshal Jourdan, and the British and Spaniards by Wellington. The latter gained the battle by his own great generalship and the courage and fortitude of his troops. Sixteen thousand Britons fought thirty thousand French for three hours, and beat them at last.

MISS E. L.—Gilt-edged paper is not at all indispensable to a lady's correspondence; on the contrary, the most elegant ladies are discontinuing its use—it is beginning to be considered snobbish and upstartish; and paper with colored edges is supplanting it in the estimation of the most tasteful. In writing to one another, gentlemen prefer the plain and substantial.

R. S. M.—You deserve much praise for refusing to spend your money along with dissolute companions, and appropriating it to the support of your young sisters. Pay no attention to the jeers of your idle acquaintances, and persevere in the course you have marked out, and you will meet with a flattering reward.

LADY ALICE.—You should wait a little while, until you can be more certain as to your affections, before deciding either to reject or accept the offer of your suitor. As for that cub of a brother-in-law, simply let him alone, and if he troubles you further appeal to your father for protection against his obtrusive intentions.

ESTELLE.—We never heard that water-drinking would make a lady stout. It would depend probably upon the amount of the *stoutifying* principle she possessed. You should not take such an increased development of physical proportions so much to heart. Ladies are such adorable creatures that the more there is of them the better.

ADVICE, New York.—If the facts of the case are as you state them, you can make the pawnbroker give up your watch and prosecute him besides for a violation of the law under which he holds his license. Put the case in the hands of some good lawyer, and he will soon get your watch for you.

M. L. P., Rockford.—T. S. Arthur is the author of the work you mention. We believe Mr. Cobb is a native of Massachusetts, but we are not sure, as we never ask questions about such matters.

A LOVESICK SWAIN.—If you do not know enough to manage such a simple case as the one you describe, you had better give up all thought of marriage. One of the first requisites to matrimony is common sense.

BOOKSELLER, Canada West.—There is sufficient matter in the LEDGER from parties entitled to a copyright in Canada to enable us to put a quietus upon any attempt to republish it there.

LOUISE, Brooklyn.—Your hand-writing is excellent for a copyist, but it is impossible to say whether or where you could get a situation.

A. F.—A girl whose father is living cannot chose a guardian.

DR. OLDFIELD asks if the reading of tales and stories may be considered beneficial to the intellectual progress of mankind. We answer—certainly. Some of the noblest truths have been inculcated, some of the highest doctrines rendered intelligible and acceptable, by being embodied in the readable and popular form of novel-writing; and beyond this, there is no doubt that the perusal of works of fiction has led many men to a love of reading generally to whom literature in a severer form would have been distasteful and wearying. For instance, many a school-boy (and many a young man, too,) would look with apprehension at an elaborate treatise on the Revolutionary War by the best historical writer who ever lived. But did any one ever hear of a boy's objecting to read "The Spy" by Cooper, or "Karmel, the Scout?" Moreover, there are ten chances to one that he will want to know more of Washington, Lord Howe, and other characters introduced in these tales when he has finished them; and that he will begin reading history, simply, in the first instance, from having fallen in with a good novel. Go to any library of a mechanics' institute, and ask what the books are which have sufficient charm to keep the working man from the tavern when his hours of labor are past, and he himself is thoroughly tired. They will tell you that ten novels are read to one book of any other class. A class of literature which can thus defraud the gambling-shop of its customers cannot be wholly useless.

A. F. W.—This correspondent "pitches into" a cotemporary severely for writing "Fanny, the eldest of two sisters," and gravely informs him that he should have written "Fanny, the *elder* of two sisters," and says that "the superlative form can only be used where there are three or more objects of comparison"—a notion which *we* pronounce quite erroneous. The superlative form is as correct with two degrees as with three. The comparative is only used comparatively or indefinitely—thus: "*an* elder brother," not "*the* elder brother." It may be said of half-a-dozen brothers that they met *an* elder brother—in all seven; but this implies that there is *the* eldest. Now *the* eldest is the *eldest*, independent of number; and when there are but two the eldest is both elder and eldest in one. It is wrong to use the *definite* article with the *indefinite* comparative. It belongs to the definite superlative, which closes the list—*the* youngest, *the* eldest. "*The younger* brother" is as awkward as "*a youngest* brother." So, "*the* more correct mode of speech," is incorrect. It should be "*a* more correct," or "*the most* correct."

MRS. E. A. W.—By re-perusing the article you mention, you will discover that its scope and spirit are *general*, and in no wise of *particular* or *specific* application. We are much astonished at the interpretation you put upon the sentence to which you refer, especially as the one which follows, as well as the whole scope of the article, shows that the writer's mind is only dwelling on the necessities of the entire community of the suffering, throughout the globe, and not on particular classes or individuals. The author of the article is altogether incapable of doing anything *covertly;* and as we pride ourselves on acting justly towards all our subscribers, it is not pleasant to be even indirectly accused of unfairness or disrespect towards any community, class, or sect. We aim to treat all fairly and alike.

ANGELICA asks, "Is it meanness to go and see a couple married in church without being invited?" That depends upon circumstances. If we were passing a country church at wedding-time, we should not think it meanness to go and see the ceremony, if the parties were strangers; but if they were personally known to us, we might or might not feel a delicacy about entering the church unasked. Much depends on the parties, and there are some degrees of acquaintanceship which would render it unbecoming. But of such reasons one must judge for himself. There is no positive and general rule that we know of for the regulation of one's conduct in this respect.

A MAN OF SEDENTARY HABITS.—Moderate exercise in the open air is very useful before dinner; but fatigue should be carefully avoided. Exercise should, if possible, always be taken three or four hours after dinner. Horse exercise is very salutary, and it has been observed that "riding is the best exercise for *regaining* health, and walking for *retaining* it." Digging in the field or garden is excellent exercise, and gymnastics are especially useful. Your habit of sleeping after dinner is a deleterious one. The inhabitants of southern climes, it is true, indulge in a siesta with impunity; but in our country, where so much animal food is used, such a practice is certainly *not* conducive to health.

LITTLE MARY.—Bread crumbs and small flies are usually given for food to gold fish; a little duckweed may also be placed in the globe. The room these delicate creatures is kept in should be of a genial temperature, as they come originally from a warm climate. The water should be changed daily, and, in cold weather, should not be replaced in a cold state, but be allowed to stand in a warm room for an hour previously; in summer, that precaution is unnecessary. They thrive best when the temperature of the water is about eighty degrees. Some people put a little moss in the globe.

QUESTIONER.—In horseback riding with a lady a gentleman should take the right-hand side. The lady's riding-habit swings on the left-hand side of her horse, and it would be very awkward for a gentleman to occupy the same side. Besides, if her habit should be flapped much by the wind, it might frighten a horse on the same side, and if her own horse should become restive the gentleman could not readily aid her if he were on her left side.

DYSPEPTIC.—Roasted meats are more nutritious than boiled. Frying is the most objectionable of all modes of cooking meats. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred food from the frying-pan disagrees with the stomach. You should eat sparingly, if at all, of cabbage, and never taste it unless it is thoroughly boiled. Cucumbers you should never eat; they are poison to a dyspeptic stomach.

AMIE.—A lady might omit to invite a gentleman to "call again" without meaning thereby to indicate that she did not wish him to repeat his visit: but inasmuch as we can only judge people by their actions, you had better not be in a hurry to call on your friend again, unless you shall become satisfied that your visit would be acceptable.

A READER OF THE LEDGER.—We can not prescribe for you, but we have been assured by one who claims to have tried it, that the following is a certain remedy for the piles, namely: Make a broth of mutton suet, and drink often of it—say a gill every half hour—and abstain from all other food until a cure is effected.

L. S. C.—Good taste would dictate that a new-married couple on their wedding tour should dress as much like other people as possible, and be careful to wear nothing which would serve as an *advertisement* of their new relation to each other.

A CLERGYMAN, Chicago.—We are much gratified at your cordial appreciation of the LEDGER. Twelve dollars will pay the subscriptions of your eight friends, and we will send the LEDGER to their different post offices.

DISTRESS.—Beware! Consult a respectable physician in Philadelphia. Surely, the far-famed medical skill of Philadelphia should be sooner trusted than the advertisements of New York quacks.

A SUFFERER.—The only way we know of to break up the habit of using opium is for the party never to put any more in his mouth. This we should think any person could do, but of course it will occasion some suffering.

LOYALTY.—Your reasoning is quite at fault. No one has a right to do *wrong* under any circumstances whatever. No matter if by *not* doing wrong you lose your life; lose it, then.

AUBURN.—A gentleman should always be introduced to a lady, *not* the lady to the gentleman. If you are making only a brief call you can keep your gloves on, and your hat in your hand, without impropriety.

LAW STUDENT, Bridgeport.—It is desirable though not absolutely necessary for a law student to be skilled in the Latin Language. As to your other questions, you had better ask your preceptor.

JENNY.—Wisdom and goodness are much more to be preferred than beauty and riches; so, Jenny, cultivate wisdom and goodness, but despise not beauty and riches.

A CONSTANT READER.—We do not care to make the LEDGER a gazetteer of the movements of "London bankers" or any other supposed great men.

EULALIE.—A young lady may commence corresponding with a gentleman whenever her mother will permit her to do so.

JULIA.—It is a matter of indifference to us whether the world be destroyed by a comet or by means of some other instrumentality.

A NEW SUBSCRIBER.—The circulation of the LEDGER is about one hundred and fifty thousand more than that of the Weekly Tribune.

AMERICA, Eufaula.—We will send you the back numbers of the LEDGER containing the "Forest Sketches" by Colonel Dunlap, from No. 1 to No. 17 inclusive for 68 cents.

MARY.—You cannot do better than to consult your mother in regard to any matrimonial projects you may have in view.

LILEY LEE.—We like your private note—you evidently have talent, but the dimensions of our columns will not admit of our engaging any more contributors.

POLYANTHUS.—A man who calls where he is not wanted, and habitually stays till after midnight, should be earnestly invited to leave and not come again.

ESTELLE MONTRESSOR.—A marriage consummated by a person under age is valid in the United States, even though it was done against the consent of the parents.

L. E. S.—Let the young man marry her whom his head and heart both approve.

STRANGER.—We know nothing about the "bridge that is to be built over the East River."

PHILOMATH.—You had better go through college.

*** *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*